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The Artist's Love

By Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth

New York
The F. M. Lupton Publishing Company

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The F. M. Lupton Publishing Company, New York City.

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The Artist's Love.

BY

MRS. EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "Fair Play," "How He Won Her," "Changed Brides," "Bride's Fate," "Cruel as the Grave," "Tried for Her Life," "Retribution," "The Lost Heiress," "Fortune Seeker," "Deserted Wife," Etc.

AND STORIES BY HER SISTER,

MRS. FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN,

Author of "The Bride's Secret," Etc.

"A thousand phantasies
Of calling shapes and beck'ning shadows dire,
And airy tongues that syllable men's names."

MILTON'S COMUS.

NEW YORK:

THE FEDERAL BOOK COMPANY,

PUBLISHERS.

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THE ARTIST S LOVE

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

"I vouch not for the truth, do ye see;
But tell the tale, as 'twas told to me."

CHAPTER I.

IN THE MAD HOUSE.

"HAPPY? Yes; always quite happy; does she not look so? And always of course quite harmless," said the doctor in answer to my question, regarding a patient, whose rooms we had just left.

I was on a visit of inspection to the Good Samaritan Lunatic Asylum, and young Dr. Bennet Abbott, was my guide through the institution. He was the third assistant surgeon there, a good looking and good hearted young fellow, with face and voice full of kindly sympathy, and he was loved and trusted by nearly all his patients.

We had made the round of the wards, and done homage to all the self-fancied kings and queens, popes and heroes, and had humored the "peculiar whim" of each monomaniac, when at length, at the end of a long gallery, that looked out upon the shrubberies and upon the sea beyond, we came to the door of a cell which the doctor opened, by turning the handle, for it was not locked.

And now came a strange sweet experience. A sphere of

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infinite peace seemed to envelope me, the moment I crossed the threshold of that little room.

Its one window looked out upon the evergreen shrubberies and beyond upon the open sea, over which was shining the clear morning sun.

A large white china vase of rare exotics, sat upon the window sill and filled the room with rich aroma.

The room itself was bare enough, but beautifully clean, with whitewashed wall, waxed pine floor, and white draped bed.

diately drew [illegible] chair by the window sat a young woman who immebeing I had ever seen [illegible]ttention, as the most fragile and *spiritual* flowing white wrapper, was so attenuated that the[illegible]hed in a was how it still had power to hold the soul within it.

Her face—how shall I portray it? For it seemed the face of a spirit! Bright golden brown hair curled around her broad forehead and shapely head, and fell down behind upon her graceful shoulders. Her eyes were very large, light blue, soft and clear and shaded by long lashes. Her other features were small and regular. Her complexion was singularly pure white, and transparent like very thin alabaster. But from those light blue eyes and from that wan, spiritual face, beamed a calm and radiant peace, ineffable and indescribable.

"Here is a friend come to see you, Marie," said the young doctor.

She looked at me and held out her little transparent white hand. She did not speak a word, but her whole delicate face lightened and softened as she smiled on me with a smile that reached my heart and seemed to communicate to me her own heavenly peace.

I sat down beside her. And the young doctor took the third and only remaining chair in the room.

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"You have beautiful flowers here," I said, referring to the rich exotics.

Again her fair, wan face brightened and softened with that wonderful smile, but she did not speak. Indeed speech did not seem to be her mode of communicating ideas.

"Is she a mute?" I enquired in a low tone, of the young doctor.

"Oh no! no indeed!" he answered. Then turning to his patient he said—"Marie, my dear, tell the lady about your flowers. Tell her who sends them to you, Marie."

"*My child*," she answered in a tone of ineffable tenderness. I never heard a human voice so soft, so liquid, so aerial. Those two words, "my child," sounded like two notes of an Eolian harp.

"She is a good child to send you such rich flowers," I said.

"Yes," she answered dreamily. "She is my angel."

"Where does she live, Marie," I next enquired.

She opened her light blue eyes so wide that they seemed to blaze with a soft fire as she answered—

"Why, don't you know? in Heaven! When I shut my eyes sometimes, I see her home there—a palace where walls are like mother of pearl, with windows of crystal and doors of silver, with gardens of celestial fruit and flowers all around, and ——" her voice, as she spoke, had gradually sunk to whispers, and soon became inarticulate, flowing in melodious, undistinguishable notes.

We sat in silence listening to her as we would have listened to the murmuring of a brook, or to the sighing of a breeze, until at last her voice ceased, and she sat with folded hands and wide open eyes, gazing far out over the sunlit waters, yet seeming to see nothing.

"We had better go now, if you please," said the doctor.

We both arose to leave the room.

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"Good bye, Marie," he said cheerfully, laying his hand upon her head.

His voice and touch aroused her from her reverie.

"Good bye, doctor," she answered, but her voice sounded as if it came from afar, or like the distant *echo* of her voice.

I held out my hand in silence; for somehow I fell into Marie's favorite mute way of communicating.

She smiled upon me with her heavenly smile, and so filled my soul with peace as we left her presence.

In the hall outside I said to the doctor—

"Here is at least one happy inmate. Is she always so?"

And he answered in the words with which this story opened.

"She interests me more than any one I have ever seen," I added.

"I do not wonder. Hers is the strangest case I ever met with," he answered.

"What brought her here?"

"Mania, of course. *Her* mania being that she is constantly attended and helped by the spirit of her child, who prompts, in others, all the kindness that is shown her, causing them to send her flowers for instance, and who opens to her the gates of Paradise, giving her glimpses of the glory within."

"Was it the loss of her child that turned her brain?"

The doctor paused for a moment. his fine face clouded over, and then in a deep whisper, he answered gravely,

"She was accused of having murdered her child."

I started with a half suppressed scream, and shrank back with horror.

There was silence between us for a moment, and then I recovered myself and exclaimed with irrepressible indignation—

"It is impossible! She, never, no, not even in a paroxysm of insanity, could have committed such a crime!"

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"It is generally believed that she did, however—but of course, in a fit of desperation."

"*I* do not believe it!" I repeated with all the earnestness of my soul.

"Do you remember," enquired the doctor, as we walked down the long passage together—"Do you remember the case of that Marie Serafinne, who was tried at Pine Cliffs, in this State, for infanticide some years ago?"

"I remember hearing and reading of it, yes."

"Well, the woman we have just left, is that very Marie Serafinne."

I gazed at the speaker in mute astonishment for the space of a minute, and then broke silence by exclaiming incredulously:

"What! why that trial took place, at least fourteen years ago, and the girl at the time was said to be sixteen years of age. That would make her now, if she were living, thirty years old. And this girl cannot be more than twenty."

"That is one of the strange features in her strange case. For the last two years she has been changing back again to youth and almost to childhood in appearance. But she is in truth that Marie Serafinne who was tried for infanticide fourteen years ago, and who owed her acquittal to the legal ability, logic and eloquence of that good and great Ishmael Worth."

"You amaze me! I cannot yet credit this story," I answered musingly.

"Come, I will convince you. I will go into the drawing-room this evening, and tell you the whole story, as I have learned it partly from herself and partly from others. You will acknowledge that it is the strangest story you ever heard in your life; but you must of course set down the amazing phenomena of the last two years of her life, to the fancies of her own mania."

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And so saying, the doctor guided me out of the long hall and through the shrubberies, to the part of the building occupied by the surgeon-in-charge.

I may as well state here, to make all clear, that I was a cousin of the surgeon's wife, and then on my first visit at their house, to spend the Christmas holidays.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE OLD OAK PARLOR.

That night I went into the drawing-room, as by appointment, to hear the story of Marie Serafinne from the lips of the young doctor.

Dr. Hamilton, the surgeon in charge, was making his last evening tour of inspection through the asylum, a duty that would occupy him for two or three hours. My cousin, Eleanor, his wife, was in her nursery, seeing her children put to bed, and soothing her teething baby—duties that would employ her for an indefinite portion of the evening.

So that I was alone in the drawing-room, with the prospect of remaining so, until Doctor Abbott should come in and join me.

It was an old-fashioned, long, low-ceiled room in an old-fashioned country house, adjoining which the new asylum had been built, when the old manor was purchased by the State for the purpose.

The doctor preferred the old house to any part of the new building, and so, with his family, he now occupied it.

I walked up and down the long, low-ceiled room, now looking from the back window out upon the darkening wintry sky, and sea, over which heavy black clouds were

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rising; and now pausing before the enormous wood-fire that was roaring in the broad old fire-place, and that the keenness of the sea air made it absolutely necessary even in this early winter weather.

A storm was rising, heavy clouds blackened over the sea, and the wind moaned around the house.

I closed the shutters and turned from the window for the last time, and went and sat down in a low chair before the fire, with my feet upon the iron fender.

I had sat there but a few minutes when the young doctor turned the knob of the door, opened it, and quietly entered.

"I am true to my appointment, Mrs. Middleton," he said, as he drew a chair to one side of the fire and sat down.

I thanked him, and remarked that a heavy storm was coming up.

"That," he said, "would be a fit and proper accompaniment to the wild story I have to tell."

And then and there, as we sat by the great wood-fire in the old manor-house amid storm and darkness, howling wind and beating rain, he told me the weird story of Marie Serafinne, first again reminding me that all which was supernatural and incredible in the narrative, I might, if I pleased, ascribe to the hallucination of the heroine. I tell the story as I heard it.

CHAPTER III.

IN CLIFF COTTAGE.

MARY SERAFINNE lived near the small hamlet of Pine Cliffs, on the Shenandoah River.

Though her father and mother had long passed to the

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spirit world, she could not be called an orphan, for she was tenderly cared for by her aged grandmother.

They were very poor and lived in a hut of one room with a loft above it, a shed behind it, and a rude fence enclosing a little bit of a garden around it;—just so much land as lay in the hollow under the lofty shelving cliff that overhung the river at that point, seeming ready to topple down and crush the little hut like an eggshell.

But as the shelving cliff had overhung the river for thousands of years without falling, its great protecting roof was trusted as a safe shelter rather than feared as a possible danger.

Here Marie and her granny lived. Here they cultivated their small garden, kept a cow, and raised poultry.

From these three resources, garden, cow and poultry-yard, they got fresh vegetables and fruit, milk, butter and eggs enough for their own consumption, besides having a large surplus for sale, which Marie took in every day to the village and sold to the hotel during the whole of the summer season, when the village was full of tourists.

With the price of this produce Marie bought tea and sugar, flour and salt, and also other simple necessaries such as they could not raise on their own little place.

The summer was their busy and profitable season. But it needed strict economy to enable them to lay up a little each summer for the coming winter. For in the winter their only source of revenue was from the woolen socks and mittens which they knit and sold to the villagers.

Marie Serafinne was a favorite in the village, and, indeed, in the whole neighborhood—"welcome in hall and hut."

All loved the gentle girl. But most especially children loved her, for she loved children.

Often when in summer she would return home from the village and bring empty buckets and a half filled purse, her

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granny, counting the money with the avarice of age, would say to her:

"Why, Marie, you took out ten quarts of milk at ten cents a quart, and here you have brought me empty pails and only ninety cents."

"Well, but granny, I met Emma and Willy, and they asked me for milk and I gave them each a drink."

And then Granny Thompson would groan and declare it was the French blood of her father, and it was a pity her own only "darter" had "married of a Frenchman."

One time, returning with empty baskets, Marie would be arraigned with:

"Dear, dear me! Didn't I send you out with fifteen quarts of raspberries at five cents a quart, and here you have brought me only sixty-five cents. Where's the other ten?"

"Granny, I met Susy and Nelly and Fanny, and I gave each of 'em a handful of berries. I couldn't help it, granny!"

Another time:

"How is this, Marie? I sent you out with a peck of sugar pears, and here you have brought back only the price of three quarters of a peck!"

"O, Granny! there was Jenny and Ally and Minnie and Ida saw the pears, and I gave them some! It is so natural for children to love fruit, granny! And if you had only seen them a-putting their dear little teeth into the pears, you'd a felt as if you was paid!"

"No, I wouldn't, neither! I don't see it at all! And no more would you, only for your father's French blood! Pity your mother ever married of a Lafayette French soldier! Mind, now, it's going to be the ruin on you! You can't say *no* to nobody! And you'd give away your very feet, if anybody *wanted them*, and *go on crutches all your life!*"

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This was strongly put, but it was nearly true of Marie Serafinne. Love of self had no place in her soul. It was filled with the love of others. To see others happy was, with her, to be very happy; to see others miserable was, with her, to be very miserable. And she knew no other happiness, no other misery.

But in the innocent joy and gladness of children she became ecstatic, and in their sorrow or suffering she suffered intensely until she could relieve them.

It was from this trait of character that Marie was best known and loved.

"What a mother she will make, some day!" said her poor neighbors.

"What an excellent nurse she would be; what a treasure in a houseful of children!" said her rich neighbors.

But Marie's chance of being happy in the position of either mother or nurse seemed very remote.

She belonged to her granny.

It is true that many of the young farmers of the neighborhood were struck by her rare beauty, but partly because she was always so busily at work cultivating her garden, feeding her poultry, milking her cow, or carrying fruit and vegetables, milk, butter, and eggs to the village, that she had no time to listen to them; partly because, when she did play, she played with children only, so that she seemed to be still but a child herself; and partly, also, because she was so extremely shy, none of her young distant admirers ever approached her with words of love.

But, ah! there came a time when the child-woman loved "with a love that was her doom."

One bright summer morning she went, as usual, to the village hotel with a basket of fruit to offer for sale to the visitors there.

It was a simple, country place, and ladies and gentlemen,

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nurses and children, were gathered upon the front porch enjoying the morning air and the magnificent mountain scenery before them.

Marie, who went in and out the house like any pet kitten, stepped on the porch, as usual, and passed among the ladies, offering her fruit.

While doing so, she overheard a voice murmur:

"What a beautiful face! Just my idea of the Virgin before the annunciation, while she was still an unconscious child in Judea! Observe that pure, white forehead, with its aureole of golden curls like a halo around it; those clear, bright blue eyes, full of soft splendor; that perfect mouth."

Marie had no suspicion that the speaker was talking of her; but she involuntarily turned around, and, as she did so, she met the gaze of a pair of large, dark eyes fixed in adoration upon her face.

Marie blushed deeply, and averted her head. And soon she took her basket and moved from the spot. But she carried with her a vision of a fine dark face, shaded with silken black curls and moustache, and lighted by a pair of large, soft, deeply shaded black eyes.

And without suspicion of wrong or danger, she thought of that fine dark face with innocent delight.

As she walked home with her empty basket, she wondered who the owner was, whether he was a visitor at the hotel, and how long he was going to stay, and if she should ever see him again. And then, with a slight feeling of pain for which she could not account, she tried to guess which of those rich, happy, handsomely dressed lady visitors it was whom he thought to be as beautiful as the blessed Virgin!

So deep was her reverie, that she reached home before she was aware. Indeed, she might have passed the little gate.

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and gone on unconsciously, had she not heard cries of distress which immediately arrested her steps.

Thinking only of her old granny then, she turned hastily into the garden, and followed the sound of the cries.

It led her through the hut into the back shed, where she found the old woman uttering loud lamentations.

Marie had scarcely time to ask what the matter was when the old woman exclaimed:

"Oh, Marie! Mooley is dead! Mooley is dead! And now we too shall die!—shall starve to death!"

"How did it happen?" faltered the girl in well-founded fear, for indeed the cow was half their living.

"Oh, she fell over the cliff! She fell over the cliff! She missed her footing, and fell over the cliff and broke her neck, and died at once! Come, look at her!" cried the old woman, sobbing and wringing her hands.

And she led Marie through the back door of the shed, and along the base of the cliff, until they came to the spot where the body of the cow lay.

Marie knelt down and tenderly stroked the face of her poor dumb friend, and saw that she was dead indeed.

"Don't cry, dear granny! I'm sorry for poor Mooley; but don't you be afraid; we shall not starve! I know they want another laundress at the hotel, and I can take in washing enough to make up for the loss of the milk and butter," she said cheerfully, as she helped the dame back to the hut.

And that same afternoon Marie went back to the village on a double errand—to engage washing from the hotel, and to get the tanner to come and take away the body of poor Mooley.

And she succeeded in both missions.

After this Marie worked harder than ever, for she found

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washing and froning more laborious than milking and butter making, while it was not quite so profitable.

Yet Marie would not, for this cause, let her poor old granny suffer for the want of any of her accustomed comforts. She bought milk and butter enough for their simple meals from a neighboring farmer.

And now her busy life for a few days kept her thoughts from dwelling on the dark, handsome face that had made such an impression on her imagination, especially as she had not seen that face since it first glowed upon her.

But one day, about a week after that first accidental meeting, she went to the village to carry a basket of clean clothes, and she was returning with a basket heavily laden with soiled linen, when, feeling great fatigue, she laid down her burden for a moment, and sat down to rest in the wood.

She threw off her hat to cool her head, and as she did so she saw for the first time, a young man seated on a rock near by, with a portfolio on his knees and a pencil in his hand.

At the same moment that she perceived him, he also looked up.

And with strangely blended emotions of delight and dread, she recognized the dark handsome stranger she had seen at the hotel.

She quietly put on her hat, took up her heavy basket and arose to go.

"Pray do not leave. If I disturb you I will myself move off," said the young man rising.

"Oh no, no, you do not disturb me, but I was afraid—I was afraid—" she stopped and blushed.

"Afraid?" echoed the young man with an interest he could not conceal.

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"Afraid I might be intruding on *you*, I meant to say," added Marie, looking down.

"If there be an intruder, it is certainly myself. I am a trespasser here on your native soil, and if you leave on my account I shall take it as a rebuke," said the stranger gravely.

The simple girl did not more than half understand him, but she gathered enough of his meaning to enable her to answer:

"You have as much right here as I have, for I have no more than the birds. The Lord lets us all come."

"Will you sit down then and rest as you meant to do? If you don't, I will go away," said the stranger, gathering up his portfolio and pencils.

For all reply, Marie put down her basket and resumed her seat, and sat there blushing and trembling — half pleased and half frightened.

And the artist resumed his seat, re-opened his portfolio, and recommenced his work.

He worked on in silence for a few minutes and then looked around at his quiet companion, and met her eyes fixed in childlike wonder and admiration upon himself.

She colored deeply and turned away her head in confusion.

The artist smiled, not without satisfaction.

"You are wondering what I am doing?" he said quietly, to reassure her. "Well, little daughter of Eve, I will satisfy your curiosity. I am sketching from nature I am making a picture. I will show it to you, and you shall tell me what you think of it, for I know you will be a competent and honest critic."

And he arose and took the sketch from his portfolio, and came and put it into her hands.

She looked at him in a sweet surprise, then fixed her

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eyes upon the sketch, and then raised them to the scene from which it was taken.

"How do you like it?" he enquired, taking the seat by her side.

"It is beautiful!" she murmured. "It is magical. I wish I could do it."

Then she stopped and flushed, and taking up her basket, she added:

"I must go now."

"What, do I drive you away after all?"

"Oh no; but I *must* go now, please. I *must* carry this basket of clothes home."

"What! this heavy basket? you will faint by the way! Let me carry it for you," he said, lifting it upon his arm.

"Oh *no*, *no*, please! Indeed, *indeed* I would rather you wouldn't!" she pleaded trembling.

"Child, I have a little sister at home just about your age. And I carry all her burdens. It would give me pain to see her carrying anything heavy. And it gives me pain now to hear you speak of carrying this. You would not wish to give any one, even me, *pain*, would you?"

"Oh no!"

"Then let me carry this for you. And see how strong I am in comparison to you!"

And so saying he carried the basket to the rock where he had left his drawing materials, and set it down there while he strapped his portfolio to his shoulders. Then he took up her basket and rejoined her.

She made no further resistance to his help. Her confidence was entirely won.

He walked by her side conversing pleasantly on such topics as came by the way.

"I am told that there is a very picturesque scene along this road, that has never yet been sketched. It is a rock

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shelving far over the river, and having at its base and under the shadow of its shelf a small cottage with a garden. Do you know where it is?" he enquired as they walked on.

"Yes, sir; it is our rock and our cottage and garden that you mean. The rock is called the Anvil, from its shape, which is just like that of a blacksmith's anvil, reaching far forward and having a flat top. We live under it," answered Marie.

"Ah! indeed! Then we are on our way there now."

"We are very near it, sir."

"How near?" enquired the young man anxiously, as if he were not at all desirous to shorten the distance, but quite the reverse.

"About a quarter of a mile, sir."

"Ah!" he said, and slackened his steps, walking very slowly.

During that walk, the artist managed to become possessed not only of the girl's full confidence, but also of her whole history, even down to the calamity of the cow's death.

When they came in sight of the hut under the cliff, the artist broke out into enthusiastic praise of the beauty of the scene. "I must certainly sketch this, Marie," he said—"Will you permit me to come here every day and sit upon that bank there and work until I finish the picture?" he softly enquired.

"Oh, yes sir; certainly. That is, I mean, I have got no right to stop you. The place is free to you as it is to all, sir."

The artist was not quite satisfied with this reply, so he enquired farther.

"But, shall I be in any way disturbing you, Marie?"

"Oh, no sir; no indeed," she answered earnestly.

They had now reached the gate of the cottage and Marie hospitably invited her companion to come in and see her granny.

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But the artist thanked her and declined the invitation.

He set down the basket, lifted his hat and bowed to her as if she had been a princess, and turned and left the spot.

Marie stood transfixed, gazing after his receding form, until he suddenly turned and looked back, when meeting his eyes, she started with some confusion and hurried into the hut.

First she threw off her hat and went into the back shed and put the soiled linen in soak, to be washed the next day, and then she went into the one room of the hut, where her granny was nodding over her knitting. She sat down beside her and told her all about the artist she had met on the road, and about his wanting to paint the cottage, and especially about his kindness in bringing home her heavy basket, even to the cottage gate.

"That's all well enough for a big man to gin a lift for a little gal. But if he wants to draw off a picter of our house, he's got to pay for it. Poor folks like us, as has lost our cow too, can't afford to give away everything, even to the wery picter of our house," grumbled the dame.

"Oh! granny! You would never want to take the gentleman's money for that!" said Marie, feeling deeply ashamed.

"I would then! And I will too before he gets a chance to steal the picter offen it for nothing! Let him up with it indeed!" growled the old woman.

Marie made no further answer; but meekly went about her little household duties, hanging the tea kettle over the fire and setting the table for supper.

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CHAPTER IV.

IN LOVE.

THE next morning the artist came early, and seated himself upon a rock on the opposite side of the road, and just upon the banks of the river.

He took out his drawing materials, arranged them, and began to sketch the hut and the overhanging cliff.

Marie had no chance of seeing him. She was busy washing out linen in the shed at the back of the hut, and hanging it to dry on the bushes at the base of the mountain.

But the old woman saw him, and went out to "tackle" him.

She stopped before him, and leaned heavily upon her stick, for she was very infirm with age, and even that short walk had tired her.

The artist arose, with the courtesy that a gentleman shows even to the humblest of womankind, and lifted his hat.

"I don't want none of that nonsense; but, first of all, I want to know your name," she said, planting her cane more firmly into the ground, and leaning more heavily upon it.

"Talbot, madam, at your service," answered the artist, promptly, and bowing again.

"None of your soft-soap, now! I'd like to know what you came here a-drawing of a picter off from my own house and home, without leave or license!"

"I obtained permission from the young lady, madam."

"A child as knows no better'n to give everything away, even down to the very picter of her own house and home, which her soft-heartedness will be the ruin on her yet! But

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what I mean to say is as you've got *me* to deal with now—a 'oman with a head onto her shoulders, and if it so be you want to draw off a picter of *my* house, you'll have to pay me for it."

"Willingly, madam. How much? inquired Mr. Talbot, taking out his pocket-book.

"I don't think as a dollar would be too much for the privilege, do you?" inquired the old woman, much softened by the sight of the pocket-book.

The artist quietly put a five dollar note in her hand, saying:

"I do not think that this will be too much."

"Five! you're a real nice young man, and not a bit of the fellow as I took you for; and if you've a mind to come in and rest any time, and get a plate of berries, or a drink of water, you shall have it free and welcome!" said the delighted old woman, grinning and nodding as she turned and hobbled toward the house.

"I haint got no grown-up galls, so it don't matter if he *do* come," remarked the old creature, who still looked on her grand-daughter, Marie, as a child.

Fortunately for Marie's peace of mind, she neither saw nor heard anything of this transaction.

Washing in the shed, or hanging out her clothes on the evergreens at the foot of the mountain behind the house, she had no opportunity of seeing or hearing anything that went on in front of it.

And, besides, she hoped that her granny had forgotten her threat against the artist's pockets, and she feared even to speak to her about it, lest she should recall it to her mind.

The day passed; Marie finished her washing and ironing, and packed her clothes into the basket, to take them back to the village hotel.

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The artist had not yet availed himself of the granny's invitation to enter the house. He had eaten the luncheon he had brought with him, seated on the rock, and had quenched his thirst from the spring that sparkled near at hand; and then he had resumed his pencil, and worked steadily on his sketch, until the setting sun warned him to pack up and return to the hotel.

He had been watching out at intervals, all day, with the hope of catching a glimpse or, perhaps, even having a word with Marie; but he had not succeeded; and now he thought he could not return to the village without seeing or speaking to her.

And he was just about to enter the little garden when he saw her come out of the door with her hat on her head, and the heavy basket on her arm.

He stepped aside to let her pass through the gate, and then he quietly took the basket from her hand, saying:

"I am going back to the village, and will carry this for you."

She flushed crimson, falteringly thanked him, and allowed him to carry it, while she walked by his side.

"You take too much trouble for me, sir," she murmured at last.

"Marie, I would do anything in the world to help or please you," he earnestly replied.

She raised her radiant light blue eyes to his face in innocent wonder.

"For I love you, Marie," he added, with a tone and look that filled her soul with terror and delight. She dropped her eyes and trembled while he went on murmuring words of love to her willing ear, until they drew near the village.

Then she awakened from her happy dream to think of his interests.

"You must not take that into the village with me, sir, please," she said in a low, timid voice.

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"And why not?"

"Oh, because it is not, indeed, fitting for a gentleman to carry a clothes basket through the public streets, you know."

Mr. Talbot knew that perfectly well.

"And with a pretty country girl walking by his side," he mentally added.

"Please, put it down, sir. I can carry it very well the rest of the way," she pleaded, stopping short and timidly raising her eyes to his face.

He set the basket on the ground, and looking tenderly upon her slight form, he murmured:

"My darling, how gladly I would carry this for you as far as it has to go. But ah! my child, if I were to do so, I should injure you."

Marie was too ignorant to understand how it could possibly hurt her. But she knew that the action would not be "fitting" to him, so she could only smile in her ignorant trust and take up her burden.

"Will you be home all day to-morrow?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," she timidly replied.

"Mrs. Thompson asked me to come into the cottage to rest and take some fruit. Would you like to have me come?"

"Oh, yes, sir" she answered in a low voice, and then flushed rosy red, and dropped her eyes as if she suddenly felt that she had said something wrong.

"Thanks, little one! Thanks, darling! I will come!" he whispered, taking her hand, and looking first into her beautiful face, and then up and down the road.

No one was in sight. He drew her hastily to his bosom, pressed passionate kisses on her lips, and then suddenly left her side.

She remained standing where he had left her delighted,

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frightened, and utterly bewildered for a minute, and then she slowly raised her burden and went on.

In a dream she delivered the clean linen to its owner. In a dream she received the next day's washing, and left the house. In a dream she returned home.

Even if we did not know it, it would be easy to foresee the end of her dream!

CHAPTER V.

IN PARADISE.

Every morning the artist went and sat upon the rock opposite the Anvil Cliff to sketch. Every noon he went into the cottage, under the cliff, ostensibly to rest and take his lunch, but really to see Marie, and feast his eyes upon her rare beauty.

He always took with him some luxury from the hotel, to make himself more welcome to the old mistress of the hut. Sometimes it would be a bottle of wine, or cordial; nice biscuits, or cakes; venison steak, or tongue; or some other dainty or dainties that the granny's soul loved.

"If that young man was to stay here, and come every day, I do think I should live twenty years longer, I do feel so much better for the good wittals he fetches," she said to her grand-daughter.

Marie would smile in silence, feeling delighted that her lover should so benefit her old grandam.

Every evening he would take leave, and walk on toward the village, as far as that forest glade where he first spoke to Marie. There he would sit and wait for her, until she came along, bearing the basket with the day's washing to take home to its owner at the hotel.

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There he would rise and take the heavy burden from her arm, and bear it for her until they drew near the village, when she would take it back and carry it on to the hotel.

He would wait where she had left him until she came back, when again he would relieve her of her new burden, and walk by her side until they reached the lonely forest glade, where they would sit down upon the rock to rest and talk.

There, every evening, they met and lingered, loth to part, heedless of passing time, until some chance, like the distant sound of an early market-wagon, would rouse them to a consciousness of the hour.

Then he would raise her basket and carry it for her to the cottage gate, where, with impassioned words and caresses, he would leave her.

She would let herself in at the door, and go quietly up to the loft where she slept, and creep to her little pallet, all without disturbing the old woman, who slept in a comfortable bed in the room below.

And this went on from day to day, and from night to night, whenever a heavy rain did not prevent it.

And did the grandmother suspect nothing of all this?

No, nothing. She looked upon Marie as too young a child to be in any danger of attracting any gentleman's attention, and also as a child quite able to take care of herself in ordinary intercourse with the world.

And so, when Marie had gone every afternoon to take the clean clothes home to their owners, the old woman would sit and knit on in peace of mind until near sunset, when she would drink the tea and eat the food that Marie had left by the fire to keep warm for her supper.

And then, leaving the door unfastened for Marie to enter, she would go to bed and go to sleep, secure in the belief that the girl would be in by dark.

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Mr. Talbot soon saw the peculiar hallucination of the dame in still considering her grand-daughter a child, and he humored it by always, in *her* presence, treating Marie as a very little girl indeed.

He longed to paint Marie's portrait; and so he said to the dame, one day, after he had comforted her soul with a glass of rich old port wine at luncheon.

"I would like to paint your little grand-daughter's picture."

"Well, young man, you can do it," said the grandam; that is, you know, on the same—"

"Yes, yes; I know; I understand," hastily interrupted the artist, for fear she should go on and humiliate Marie before his face, by charging money for her sittings, which he knew she was about to do. "May I begin to-morrow?" he inquired.

"Oh yes, young man, you may begin any time, so as you do the right thing by me."

"Yes, yes; I will certainly do right. I will come to-morrow, then."

"Oh, stop, now! Don't you be in such a hurry! Hear what I've got to say first! I want to have a right understanding on two things."

"I assure you, Mrs. Thompson, I will agree to anything you propose, only, pray, let us say no more of *that* just now," exclaimed the artist.

"Well, then, I s'pose as how you wouldn't think ten dollars too much to pay me for letting you take my granddarter's picter?" persisted the old woman.

"No; nor ten times ten" impatiently answered the artist.

"Oh, granny! granny! how *could* you do it?" cried the deeply-mortified girl, as soon as she recovered the breath of which the old woman's mercenary words had, for the minute, dispossessed her.

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"Hush up, Marie! you're a child!' snapped the dame.

Marie put her hands up to her face and wept.

The artist attempted to laugh off her distress as the irritability of a child, and soon he arose and went out to his sketching.

That evening, when they met in the forest glade, Marie again wept with mortification.

"To think," she said, "that granny could do such a thing! But she is old and childish, sir—indeed, she is very old and very childish, or she never could have done it!"

"My sweetest girl!" said the lover, caressing her, "she did quite right. In the city where I live, sitters, or models for artists, frequently get a high price, and make a comfortable living."

"But not I, oh, not I! I could not do such a thing, especially to you! to you!" she sobbed.

"You are a little goose! But what then? Will you not sit for me?"

"Oh, yes, yes! I would sit for you all day, and every day, if you wished me to do it! But not for money! Oh, no; not for money!"

"My sweetest girl! you will sit for me. I shall take so much happiness in gazing on this heavenly face while I try to transfer its beauty to the canvas. Your grandmother must take what she claims, not so much for your sittings as for my use of her cottage as a studio. There! be consoled! Think how happy I shall be while painting your picture."

And so he soothed her wounded spirit.

The next morning the artist arrived early at Cliff Cottage. He wished to have the morning light, he said.

But early as it was, Marie and her grandmother had had their breakfast, and Marie had set the room in perfect order for the reception of Mr. Talbot.

The old woman greeted him very graciously, and set a chair for him.

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If she had not been half-blind, as well as half-silly, with age, she must have seen the vivid blush, the beaming eyes, and smiling lips with which the maiden met her lover, and must have read the language of that look aright.

But the poor blind and foolish old woman saw nothing but the painter and his subject.

Talbot was loaded like a porter, with his easel, pallet, portfolio, prepared canvas, paint-brushes, and all the paraphernalia of a travelling artist's profession.

One by one he placed them on the floor, and commenced his arrangements.

"But how about the washing, Marie? You can't sit for your picter and get that done in time to take it home this evening."

"No, granny, I told the ladies that I should not have time to do any more laundry work for a week, or may be more. And so I didn't bring away any clothes," answered Marie, as she took a seat and position according to the artist's direction.

"That's all well enough, long as Mr. Talbot does the right thing by me, 'cause it 's more profitable to me for you to sit than to wash! Still, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and the washin' was a sure thing, certain to last, and the sittin' ain't. So, I say, you ought to a held on to it, even if you had to sit up nights to do it! That's what I say!"

Marie said nothing in reply to this.

But as for Talbot, he could scarcely control the indignation he felt at the avaricious old creature, who would have heavily overtasked the delicate girl without the slightest compunction.

He applied himself to this delightful work. He wished to "paint her as he saw her" now, and afterward successively as "Hope," as "Peace," as "Joy," as "Miriam," and as the "Blessed Virgin."

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He could never tire of painting that lovely face. Thus, in fancy, he sketched out a long summer and autumn's work, careless of how much time and money it might cost him.

He worked away at the picture, while Marie sat patiently before him, and the old dame waddled about the house looking after her own affairs, until the little cracked clock, on the corner shelf, jangled out the twelve strokes of noon.

"I have tired you, Marie!" said the artist, throwing down his brush. "I have been merciless in taxing you to-day, but, indeed, I did not know how late it was till the clock struck.

"I am not tired the least," said the girl, smiling.

"You think so! But come, let us have lunch! I have brought some fine cordial, and other dainties, for grandma," he added, rising.

After the luxurious luncheon he had brought into the poor cottage had been taken, and thoroughly enjoyed by the little party of three, and Marie had cleared the table, and made the room tidy again, she resumed her sitting, and the artist recommenced his work.

The old woman fell sound asleep in her old arm-chair.

There was but little painting done that afternoon.

It was near sunset when the dame suddenly sneezed and coughed and opened her eyes.

And she *thought* she saw the artist and her granddaughter sitting close together, he with his arm around her waist, and she with her head upon his bosom. But the next instant she thought she must have dreamed it, for when she rubbed her eyes and looked again he was standing quietly before his easel, with his pallet in one hand and his brush in the other, studying the picture, and Marie was sitting motionless in her seat.

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"Ain't it a getting most too dark for to do any more painting?" she inquired, rousing herself.

"Yes, dame, I think it is," answered the artist, laying down his pallet and brush. "You have had a refreshing sleep, I hope?"

The granny answered only by a loud yawn.

The artist prepared to depart. He reversed the picture on the easel, and stood the easel up into a corner, where he begged that it might be permitted to remain untouched until the morning. He stowed his drawing and painting materials behind it. And Marie promised to take care of the whole lot.

He felt very much disappointed of his usual evening saunter with Marie, for now he knew that she had no washing to take to the village, and, therefore, no excuse for a walk.

But the old woman came, like an unconscious Fate, to his assistance.

"Marie!" she exclaimed sharply while rummaging among the little round grocery boxes, "Marie, I don't know what's come over you lately, you are grown that careless! Do you not know there ain't so much as a grain of coffee in the box for breakfast to-morrow morning?"

"I can go to the village and get some this evening, granny," eagerly replied the girl.

"Well, go then. I must have my coffee for breakfast. I can't enjoy of my breakfast withouten coffee."

Marie sprang joyfully up to get ready. Here was to be a delightful walk without even a heavy basket to be carried.

The lovers went out together.

As they crossed the threshold of the cottage the sun suddenly sunk behind the mountain, casting all the valley into shadow.

Alas! for the correspondence. That night the sun went

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down upon Marie's happiness, casting all her youthful life in sorrow!

That night, in a small neighboring hamlet, and under assumed names, there was a secret marriage contracted between the lovers, a marriage fraught with woe.

CHAPTER VI.

IN DANGER.

Summer passed, and the first month of Autumn was drawing to its close. The company, even to the latest loiterers, had all left the hotel—with one exception, that of the artist, Talbot, who still lingered.

"The woods," he said, "are so glorious in October, that I must paint them."

This was the excuse he gave to the last of his companions that shook hands with him on parting.

But neither his comrade nor any one else believed him.

In a little mountain hamlet like Pine Cliffs, isolated from all the rest of the world, everybody knows everything—and a great deal more—about everybody else.

All Pine Cliffs knew what kept Roland Talbot, the artist, lingering in the neighborhood; all, in fact, except the blind and doting old woman at Cliff Cottage.

The gorgeous month of October passed away.

All the portraits of Marie in the various characters the artist had thought of had been painted, and were carefully packed and dispatched to his studio in a distant city; yet still the artist lingered, though no other work was undertaken, no glorious autumn landscape was transferred to the canvas.

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The day at last came when he was *compelled* to depart.

Then he would have persuaded the beautiful cottage girl to accompany him to the city. He described to her the vastly superior comforts and conveniences, pleasures and splendors of the capitol. He painted them in the most glowing colors. But she was not tempted by the picture.

"If I could go at all, love, it would not be for any of these things, but for *you*, the love and the lord of my life. But I cannot leave the poor old woman to die alone in her age," she answered meekly, with her head upon his bosom.

Then he pleaded his own love and his loneliness without her; and he pleaded with all the ardor, earnestness and eloquence of a devoted lover who was determined to win his cause. He even promised to own her as his wife, if she would go with him.

But still clinging tenderly to him, she answered sadly through her falling tears:

"Oh! I *wish* I could! Love! I have given up to you in everything, because I love you. It makes me so happy to obey you, and so wretched to oppose you; but I *must not* leave her in her age and poverty to die alone."

Finding all his efforts to persuade Marie to go to the city in vain, the artist left her in real or pretended anger.

And she returned in despair to her cottage home.

Marie had known Roland Talbot since May. And he had been her lover from the first. It was now November. The weather had continued fine up to the day of Talbot's departure. The day after he left it suddenly changed, and there was a week of dark and clouded skies, and of fierce wind and rain, that stripped all the glorious woods of their gaudy autumn foliage. So that when at length the weather cleared, there was nothing but bare branches above, and brown leaves below.

Ah! then the weather changed with Marie's spirit also.

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clouds and darkness and desolation took possession of the soul once so radiant with sunshine and happiness.

Her physical health and strength had been failing for some time past. She could not now resume her laundry work, and toil between the village and the cottage with heavy baskets of clothes, even if she could have got custom at this dull season, which was doubtful.

The absence and silence of her lover, too, made her unspeakably wretched, and the more acutely so because within a week after his departure she had become assured of the terrible fact that she, an unacknowledged wife, would be a mother. But for her own extreme ignorance and simplicity, she might have known this months before, for it was already known to the matrons of the village, who were equally unsparing in their denunciations of the artist and his dupe," as they called her.

The discovery filled the poor girl with dismay.

Her anguish and despair were all the fiercer and deeper that they must be suffered alone. She could not tell her fatal secret to any one, or seek sympathy or counsel anywhere. She must pass through the fiery furnace alone!

Whenever now she went to the village to sell the woolen socks and stockings that her grandmother had knit, her neighbors would look contemptuously and speak coldly to her, if they spoke at all. But often they would turn away without noticing her. All this wounded her sore heart to the quick, even before she understood the reason.

Now since her own discovery of her fatal secret she understood their hatred and contempt too well.

At length an incident, a trifling one in itself, filled her cup of sorrow and humiliation to overflowing.

As I said before, she was passionately fond of children.

One day she had been out in the woods all the forenoon gathering chestnuts to sell. In the afternoon she was

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taking these to the village when she met a crowd of children out for their ramble. She knew them. They had been her darling pets.

At the sight of their happy faces, she almost forgot her terrible trouble. She smiled on them, opened her basket of chestnuts, and invited them to come and help themselves.

But the children shrank away from her in fear and aversion, and huddled together as if for mutual support.

"Won't you speak to me, Emma? Won't *you*, Ida?" she pleaded in heart-broken tones, as she held out her hand beseechingly.

Neither of the children addressed replied to her.

"Mamma says we must not speak to you ever again, because you're a very wicked girl," answered Jenny, the eldest of the group. And the other children huddled around her as if for protection.

And none else spoke to the stricken girl, except the tender-hearted two year old Gladdy, who said:

"*Poor* May-ee!" and ran towards her with outstretched hands.

But the nurse snatched the child up and carried her off, followed by the other children.

Wild with anguish, Marie cast her basket of chestnuts away, and threw herself upon the ground, crying to the only Merciful Heart she knew:

"Have I been so wicked? Lord and Saviour, who never yet rebuked a poor, loving woman, have I been so wicked? Loving Lord, who had no words but words of pity for poor sinning women, forgive and help me now!"

Stretched face downward upon the dead leaves, she wept and sobbed in a wild storm of sorrow and humiliation, until she heard the footsteps of some approaching passenger, when she started up, and forgetting her basket, hurried towards her home.

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It was nearly dark within the hut when she entered the door.

The old woman was hovering over the wood fire that she now stirred into a blaze to see the face of her grand-daughter.

That face, seen in the bright light, was pale and haggard with anguish, and the eyes were still streaming with tears.

"Why, what on the yeth is the matter with you, gall?" enquired the old woman aghast.

"Oh, Granny! Granny! the children hurt my feelings so! They wouldn't even speak to me. They wouldn't!" cried the girl, bursting into fresh tears and sobs.

"And why wouldn't they speak to you, I'd like to know? Drot their impidince! ain't *my* granddarter as good as any o' them?" wrathfully enquired the dame.

"Oh! no, no, no!" cried the girl, unable longer to bear the load of her secret anguish, and goaded to confession. "Oh! no! no! no! I am a lost and wretched creature!'

"What—what—what—what do you mean? You *ain't* been stealing? Oh, Lord! you *ain't* been stealing?" faltered the old woman in bewilderment and terror.

"Oh, no, not that. I couldn't do that! But, oh granny! I'm lost! I'm lost!" cried the girl, sinking at the dame's feet.

And with her face in the dame's lap, and in wild and broken words she poured forth the story of her love and trust betrayed!

"I never heerd of sich a thing in all the days of my life, no, not since I was a gal!—as a child like you being so took in! And I don't see now how it could a been. And I can't hardly believe it! Why, how old be ye?"

"You know, I shall be— be—sixteen, next—next Christmas," sobbed Marie.

"Shill you, now? How time do pass! And I was thinking as you was about thirteen or fourteen. The wil-

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lain! But it was my fau't, it warn't you'rn. What did you know? It was my fau't as should a took better care on ye. And so he promised to own you for his wife from the first, did he, and kept puttin' it off?"

"Yes;" sobbed Marie.

"And he wanted you to follow him to the city, and leave me, did he? and he promised to own you there?"

"Yes."

"He wouldn't a kept his word, child. Them devils never keep their word with a girl who trusts them. They are liars, and sons of the father of lies. The comfort is they all go home to their daddy at last."

"Oh, Granny, he is not as bad as that. He is not bad at all. He wanted me to go with him, and I wouldn't leave you," wept Marie.

"He wanted you to go to the city with him, did he, and you wouldn't leave me? Well, you shall both be suited, you and him! You shall go to the city and shall not leave me. I'll go along of you. We'll go and hunt up my fine gentleman, and make him do ye justice! Breach o' promise it be! And wery aggrawated at that! 'Dancin' bears must pay for their airs.' And he shall pay for hizzen too. If he do acknowledge ye, you'll be a rich 'oman and me too! An' if he *don't*, it 'il be thousands o' dollars out'n his pocket and into your'n an' mine!" mumbled the old woman.

Poor Marie! She had been very much surprised and confounded by her grandmother's unexpected and hearty sympathy; but here was the sad solution of the problem of her conduct—cupidity. The hope of thousands of dollars, that in either case of acknowledged marriage or of breach of promise, would come into Marie's possession, and practically into her own—and of the external decencies and comforts, those thousands would secure to her, and which in her estimation, would be splendors and luxuries.

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Now, she looked upon her grand-daughter, as a mine of wealth, and busied herself in waiting on the girl, as the girl until this night, had waited on her.

She made Marie lie down on the bed and rest, while she herself prepared tea and toast which she persuaded her to take.

"Now you shan't go up and sleep on that hard pallet in the cold loft. You shall sleep with me," said the dame as she replenished the fire to keep it up all night, and then closed up the cottage, previous to retiring.

A heavy load was lifted from Marie's conscience. She had confessed to that one, to whom of all on earth, she was only responsible. And she had been forgiven.

If that hard old dame could pity and pardon her, would not the merciful Lord, much more? She prayed and fell asleep, and for the first time in many days, she slept soundly until morning.

When she woke, the sun was shining through the uncurtained window of the hut. The old woman was, or seemed to be, still asleep. She arose very cautiously lest she should awaken the old grandame, and quietly dressed herself, and made up the fire and put on the kettle.

The dame slept on.

She made the corn griddle cake and put it on to bake. Took a smoked herring from its stick and put it on to broil, and then set the humble table for two, and sat down to wait

And the dame slept on.

Not to waste time, while waiting, Marie took up her grandmother's knitting, and knitted for about fifteen minutes. And still the dame slept on.

She sleeps later than I ever knew her to do," said the girl, as she arose and went to the bed side, and laid her hand softly on the forehead of the sleeper.

With a scream she started back.

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That forehead was ice-cold in death!

In a few moments she so far overcame her terror and repugnance as to take the lifeless hand in her own.

But it was as rigid as marble, and could not be moved from its position.

Full of wild horror, Marie ran from the house, and up the road leading to the village, and accosted the first person she met, who happened to be a countryman.

The alarm was soon given, and the hut was soon filled with the poor neighbors.

A physician was called, who pronounced the case a death from natural causes.

Then orders were given for a cheap burial at the county's expense. This was adding humiliation to sorrow in Marie's case, but she could not help it, for there were not two dollars in the house to meet the costs of interment.

Two days after this the body of old Granny Thompson was buried, and poor Marie was left alone in the solitary hut.

She wrote to her lover in the city; but whether he ever received that letter is doubtful; that he never answered it is certain.

Three more letters were written, but they suffered the same fate as the first.

Then Marie gave up writing, and sat down in despair to await her fate.

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CHAPTER VII.

IN PURGATORY.

Awful days and nights followed for the poor, deserted girl.

The dark days of December were upon her. Storms of rain and wind and snow followed each other in swift succession. The road to the village became impassable. She was without money and almost without food, or fuel.

She had nothing left to eat but a few potatoes, stowed in the bottom of the cupboard, next the chimney corner, as the warmest place to keep them from freezing.

Nor had she anything to make her fire, except the brush wood from the foot of the mountain, which she would go and collect whenever an interval in the weather permitted her to do so.

But oh! the days of misery and nights of horror in that lone mountain hut, with nothing to think of but her wretched past and terrible future!

Had it not been for the shameful wrongs she had suffered, she might now have been in a comfortable and happy position as nursery governess to some of those children she so dearly loved. And this would have been an earthly Heaven to her humble and loving spirit.

And even now, abandoned, as she was, by the lover for whom she had staked all, even now, if she could have been pardoned and pitied, and cared for, a little while, by some good Christian woman, she would have looked forward to her maternity with humble, chastened joy, and devoted her future life to her child.

Yes, she would have been a good mother.

But now, abandoned, scorned, covered with contumely,

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until driver. to despair and madness, she believed herself to be deserted equally by God and man.

Alone in her hut by day and night, for weeks and weeks, with those demoniac thoughts to tempt, and taunt, and phrensy her, who can wonder at the tragedy that soon followed?

I must get over this part of my story as quickly as I can, for it is too heart-rending for detail.

It was Christmas Eve, and the ground was covered a foot deep with hard frozen snow. The weather was clear though very cold.

A farmer's wife, driving her own little wagon, was going to the village that morning to buy some cheap toys to put in her children's stockings that night.

As she passed along the narrow road that lies between the foot of the mountain ridge and the edge of the river, she came in sight of the hut under the cliff, occupied by Marie Serafinne.

And at the same moment, she saw that no smoke issued from the chimney, even on this bitter cold day, and she heard sounds of wild weeping and wailing, proceeding from the house.

Mrs. Butterfield was, "after the most straitest sect a (female) Pharisee," so, though she drew up her horse before the hut, she hesitated and listened a full minute before she made up her mind to enter the dwelling of that "abandoned creature," as she called Marie.

But these were Christmas times, and full of all kindly inspirations.

So she got out of her cart, and leaving her steady, old family horse to stand and rest, she entered the hut.

A terrible sight met her eyes!

Marie Serafinne sat up in bed, raving, tearing her hair and accusing herself of—murder!

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Before her lay the small body of a prematurely born child.

The poor little corpse was frozen stiff. The miserable mother was blue and shaking with cold, for there was no fire on the hearth, and the bitter winds came in at the cracks in the walls and windows:

"Oh! you wretched, wretched creature! how came you to do this dreadful, dreadful deed," enquired the farmer's wife, aghast, at the sight.

"I don't know! I didn't mean to do it! I didn't even know when I did it! But then, I *must* have done it, because there was no one else here, not a soul but me, so of course I must have done it! Oh, me! I wish I had never been born!" exclaimed Marie, between her wild wailings.

"Of course you did it, and there's no use denying it! Oh you horrid creature! Don't you *know* they'll hang you for it?" asked the woman with a shudder.

"Yes, yes, I know! But that's a trifle! I've borne so much worse than that! But my child! my child! My tiny, helpless child!" she cried, bursting into tears and sobs as she seized and pressed the little frozen body to her bosom.

"I can't stand this! I can't stay here!" said the farmer's wife, beginning to feel deep pity mingle with her indignation and horror, and becoming half hysterical from their conflict. "Here! lie down and let me cover you up, for goodness sake! And tell me, if you can, where I can find something to kindle a fire, or you will freeze and die before you can make your peace with Heaven."

And without waiting for a reply she forced the feeble girl back upon the pillow, and covered and tucked her up carefully.

Then she took the little frozen babe and laid it out decently on a corner of the foot of the bed, and took off her own white apron and covered it over.

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By this time her fingers were so stiff with cold that she had to beat and blow them, before she could do anything else.

She then turned about and found a little pile of brushwood, and a box of matches with which she made a fire Then she searched for meal or flour with which to prepare gruel for the perishing girl on the bed.

But there was nothing of the sort to be found.

"Is there anything in the house I can fix for you to eat?" she inquired, coming to Marie's side.

"Nothing, nor do I want anything," the girl answered feebly.

The farmer's wife groaned.

"I don't know what to do with you; but I reckon I better go at once and see if I can get you a doctor, and some victuals. Now you lay quiet till I come back," she said, as she hurried out of the house and jumped into her wagon.

She whipped up the old horse to a gait that made him stare. And she soon reached the village, when she gave information of the case to old Dr. Barton, the only medical man at hand.

Then, after hurriedly picking up the toys she had first set out to buy, she purchased some food and hurried back to the hut to feed the starving girl, whom, however, she could scarcely prevail upon to eat.

She waited beside the patient until the old doctor came, and then she returned to her own family, with the promise to send one of her negro women to take care of Marie Sorafinne.

On seeing the condition of affairs at the hut, Dr. Barton's painful duty was clear before him—first, to do what he could to save the wretched girl, and then to report the case to the proper authorities.

And the result of his action was this—that the same day

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at noon, the Coroner's jury met at the hut, and after a brief examination of the evidence, returned a verdict that the child, a prematurely born female infant, came to its death by strangulation at the hands of its mother, Marie Serafinne.

The little body was interred at the cost of the county And a warrant was issued for the arrest of Marie Serafinne

And in a state more dead than alive—indifferent also to life or death, she was taken from her bed, placed in a carriage, and driven to the county gaol at Pine Cliffs.

For the first week of her imprisonment she lay lingering on the brink of the grave, but by the skill of the prison doctor, she was brought safely through the crisis of her illness.

On the first day of the New Year, she awoke from long unconsciousness, and asked what day it was.

They told her it was New Year's day.

She played idly with her thin fingers for a few minutes, and then murmured:

"Only eight months, and all this? I was free and happy in May—now I am *here!*"

No one answered her, there was indeed little pity for her.

She lay in prison from the last week in December, till the first week in March, when the Criminal Court sat at Pine Cliff.

Then she was brought out and put on trial for the murder of her child.

The trial attracted many persons to the court house. And the court room was densely crowded.

But many who had never seen Marie Serafinne, and who expected to behold in the accused a monster as revolting in appearance as the alleged crime was in essence, were astonished when they saw the slender, fragile form, and the fair, wan face and simple, child-like aspect of the young prisoner.

When she was formally arraigned and asked whether she were guilty, or not guilty, she answered very artlessly—

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"I wouldn't have hurt my poor little baby to have saved my own life, if I had known it. But I didn't know when I did it. I didn't even know I had done it. But I know I must have done it, because there was nobody else in the house. And, sir, I am willing to die for it."

She was here instructed that her informal answer would not do; but that if she could not recollect having committed the crime, she must plead "not guilty."

Then, in her obedient spirit, she pleaded as she had been told to do.

When asked if she had any counsel, she answered, "No sir."

But just then the stately form and noble face of Mr. Ishmael Worth, of the Richmond bar, one of the most eminent lawyers and humane gentlemen of the age, was seen to rise from the crowd of spectators.

He had only that day arrived in Pine Cliff, on his way to Washington City. And his presence in the court room was purely accidental—or providential.

He now advanced, and bowing to the Bench, said:

"Your Honor, I am counsel for the prisoner, if she will accept me."

His words produced the profoundest sensation. Here was a lawyer of world-wide renown, whose advocacy almost always secured a verdict for his client, whether in a criminal or a civil suit, and whose retaining fee was often as high as ten thousand dollars—offering now to give his inestimable time, talents, and legal knowledge to the defence of a poor, friendless, and penniless outcast.

"She will thankfully accept your aid, no doubt, Mr. Worth," said the judge.

Ishmael Worth bowed, and passed to the side of the young prisoner, who after her arraignment, had been permitted to sit down in a chair, under the immediate surveillance of a constable.

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"You are willing to let me try to save you, my child?" he said kindly.

"I thank you very much, sir, but I have no money, not a cent," she answered in her apathetic way.

"Money? poor child! I do not want any from you," he answered gently.

"And besides, sir, I am willing to die," she added meekly.

"But we are not willing to let you die, especially, with an undeserved stigma upon your name, as I am sure this is."

And then, again addressing the Bench, he said:

"Your Honor, I crave of the Court opportunity to confer with my client, and to examine the evidence against her."

Then followed a short consultation between the Judge and the State's attorney. And then, as it was near the hour of noon the Court was adjourned until two P. M.

When the Judge had left the bench, the prisoner was taken to the marshal's room, where she was left alone with her counsel.

Ishmael Worth, true, tender, sympathetic, drew from the forsaken girl, the sad story of her love and trust, and bitter wrongs and sufferings. And he knew that every word she spoke was truth, except, indeed, her despairing self-accusations of the death of her babe.

"I do not believe you are guilty," he said, as soon as he had heard her to the end.

"I must be," she said piteously; "for my child was living. I heard her cry! That is all I know till I saw her dead! But I never meant to hurt her. I would have died first. *She* knows it now; for she must be an angel in Heaven."

"Hush, Marie! You are very ignorant—almost as ignorant as the Dogberries of the Coroner's jury, who found the

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verdict against you. I shall summon as a witness for the defence, the celebrated Dr. Marius Samson, who is our greatest authority in that special department of the practice of medicine that affects your case. I think his testimony will be valuable," replied Mr. Worth, as he set himself to examine a copy of the minutes of the Coroner's inquest, with which the marshal had just furnished him.

When the Court met in the afternoon, Mr. Worth asked for a postponement of the trial, until an important witness for the defence could be brought from Baltimore.

The petition was granted, and the trial postponed until that day week, the fourteenth of March.

Marie Serafinne was remanded to her prison; and the Court took up other cases of less vital importance.

Ishmael Worth deferred his visit to Washington, and gave his full attention to getting up the defence of this poor girl, as if he had been retained with a ten thousand dollar fee, or as if he had been a young barrister with his reputation depending upon the success of his first case. In the interim, he had many interviews with his client.

The day of trial came, and the Court, as before, was crowded.

The prosecution was opened by a short address of the State's attorney to the jury, followed by the calling of the first witness, Mrs. Butterfield, the farmer's wife, who discovered the dead child.

She testified to the facts within her knowledge, and which are already known to the reader.

She was followed by Dr. Barton, who being called to the stand testified that he had made a post-mortem examination of the child's body, and found from appearances that it had been born alive and subsequently strangled.

These were the only two important witnesses for the prosecution, which closed with a short summing up address by the State's attorney.

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The cross examination of witnesses was rigidly reserved for the defence.

Mr. Worth arose on the part of the prisoner. He, too, made but a short preliminary speech before calling witnesses.

First, he called in succession some of the most respectable citizens of the county, who had known the little cottage girl, Marie Serafinne, from her childhood to the present time, and could testify to the uniform gentleness and sweetness of her temper and disposition.

Finally, he called his most valuable witness—Dr. Marius Simson, of Baltimore, the greatest authority on the medical questions bearing upon this case. He had prepared himself for the present occasion by reading up the minutes of the post-mortem examination with great care.

And now being sworn and examined, he proved by a very thorough process of testimony, that the child came to her death by accidental physiological causes alone.

The doctor submitted to a very strict cross-examination by the prosecution; but that only brought out his evidence in a clearer, stronger light.

He sat down.

Doctor Barton, who had been a witness for the prosecution, was now recalled by the defence.

He was subjected to a searching cross-examination, during which he became confused, exposed his own comparative ignorance, entangled his own former testimony, and upon the whole corroborated that of Dr. Simson.

He was then permitted to retire. And Mr. Worth arose to address the jury, with one of those strong, pithy, closely reasoned and eloquent appeals that nearly always gained his cause.

And with the end of his speech the defence closed.

The Judge summed up in a very few, impartial words, and gave the case to the jury.

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Without even leaving their seats, the jury returned a prompt verdict of

"Not Guilty."

And the young prisoner was discharged from custody, and found herself at liberty before she well understood what had happened to her.

The usual great gabbling among the spectators, followed the rendering of the verdict and the adjournment of the Court.

"So, she warn't guilty after all," said one.

"But she would have been convicted and hanged all the same upon the testimony of old Dr. Barton, if Mr. Worth had not taken up the case, and brought that great Dr. Marius Simson, from Baltimore, to show up the rights of things," said another.

"And to think that Mr. Worth not only gave up all his own precious time, good for million a month almost in term time, but actually paid all the expenses of bringing this witness here, whose time was nearly as precious as his own. It was princely!"

"'Princely?' Yes! But Ishmael Worth is a prince among men!"

While these comments were being made by the crowd, Ishmael Worth took the hand of his bewildered client and drew her arm within his own, and led her into the open air in front of the Court house.

"My child, where do you wish to go?"

"First of all, on my knees, to thank you, sir, for saving my poor life, and for much more than that, for proving not only to the jury, but to my own bleeding heart that I never hurt my poor baby even while I was out of my head!"

"Stay! stay, Marie! you must kneel only to the Lord, and not to his human instrument! Where shall I take you? I wish to see you in safety before I leave you. I have to

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drive to the Wendover station, and take the train to Richmond to-night."

"I wish to go to my own little house under the cliff. But don't you trouble to take me there, sir. I can go very well alone."

"You are sure?"

"Yes, sure."

"Then, here child. Take this," he said, putting a twenty dollar bill in her hand, which she made a gesture of refusing —"Nay, you must take it, as from a father. And here is my address. If ever you should want a friend, write to me," he added, as he forced the bank note with his card into her hand.

He was gone. And she hurried down the street, and out of the village by the road leading to her hut.

As soon as she found herself alone in the woods, she knelt down and thanked the Lord for her great deliverance, and prayed Him to bless her benefactor, Ishmael Worth.

Then she hurried on towards her hut. But when she reached the spot, a great shock awaited her. The hut had disappeared, and young men were at work digging out red sand-stone from under its late foundation. The hut, indeed, had never been her own or her grandmother's property. They had lived in it rent free, by the sufferance of the rich landholder, who owned the ground.

His interests had at last required its removal. And during the long imprisonment of its mistress, which it was supposed would end only in death, he had had it pulled down, for the sake of the quarry beneath it.

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CHAPTER VIII.

OUTCAST.

She saw and understood all at a glance; for there had been quarrying in that neighborhood before; and the chance of losing their little home through the quarrying had been one of the bugbears of her grandmother's last days.

She uttered no complaint, if indeed, there had been anything to complain of.

She only asked one of the workmen what had been done with her grandmother's little household furniture.

The man raised his head and recognized her, with a look of horror and disgust that chilled her heart.

He would not even speak, but pointed to a log cabin about a quarter of a mile distant, down on the other side of the road.

Marie turned away heart-sick of the world.

The sun was sinking behind the mountain, and the shadows were darkening over the valley!

How well she remembered one similar scene some ten months before when she took one fatal walk with her lover, and the sun went down on her happiness forever.

Night was coming on, and she had not where to lay her head!

She walked slowly towards the hut which the workman had pointed out, as containing the relics of her grandmother's poor furniture.

The log hut was occupied by a negro woman, called Aunt Sukey, and her husband and children, all slaves of the rich landholder who owned the quarry.

On seeing Marie Serafiane approach, they came out to meet her, not with words of welcome but with looks of silent aversion.

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Poor Marie explained meekly enough that she had come only to ask about her grandmother's poor household goods, that were not worth much, she added; but if the woman would give her shelter that night and the next day, or until she could think of where to go, she (the woman) might have the little bit of furniture.

"It's only a bed and a arm-chair, and some little tea things and sich! All the rest was stole, I reckon. Marse tole me to keep these, case you ever come to want 'em. So dey let you off did dey? Marse said dey would, soon's he hear Marser Worth took you up," remarked Aunt Sukey, staring at her visitor.

"They said I was not guilty. *And I was not*, Aunty," meekly replied the girl, as, no longer able to stand, she sank down and sat upon a stone.

"I dunno. Hard tellin' whedder you is or not. Well, you kin stay here to-night. Which I hopes to goodness you won't do nuffin bad to my poor chillun," said Aunt Sukey, doubtfully.

"Oh, Heaven! Do you think I am a devil?" cried poor Marie, bursting into tears.

"Dunno. Hard tellin what you is. But you kin stay here to-night, anyways, 'cause I don't spect no white person ain't agoin' to take you in. So git up offen de damp groun', and come in de house."

Marie thanked her rude hostess, and went into the hut.

The woman soon set before her a bowl of tea and a piece of corn bread and fish; and pointed to the only bed in the room, saying:

"Arter you done eating you kin go to bed dere, if you want to. Me and de chillun can sleep up in de lof, and my ole man, he gone ober to Mr. Butterfield's to work, and won't be home 'till to-morrow night."

Marie availed herself of this permission. And after eat

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ing a little of the frugal supper, she laid down to rest, and, if possible to sleep.

The next morning she went back to the prison where she had left her clothes. They were so few that she tied them up in one small bundle.

Then she went from house to house in the village, to try to get a place in service.

She thought—poor girl!—that her acquittal by the jury, was also her perfect vindication before the world. And, remembering how willing and even anxious many families had been to take her into their service, she believed that, now she was acquitted, she might surely get some humble place.

She soon found how bitterly self deceived she had been!

She was literally and scornfully turned away from every door at which she dared to rap; until late in the day, her limbs sinking with fatigue, her eyes streaming with tears, her heart nearly breaking, she appeared once more at the negro woman's hut to beg a night's lodging, offering to pay for it over and above the furniture she had already given.

Even on those terms, the favor was grudgingly granted, for the woman's husband had come home, and he said; he "didn't want no interlopers, 'specially sich as she."

And Aunt Sukey herself gave it as her opinion that,

"The young gal had better go 'way some'ers, a long distance off, case it was sartin she never could do no good here, where she was known."

Poor Marie had come to the same sorrowful conclusion.

The next morning after partaking of the frugal breakfast set before her by her rude hostess, she tied up her little bundle and left the hut to seek her fortune away from the neighborhood.

Marie Serafinne had never been five miles away from home in her life. And to her rustic thought the neighbor-

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ing town of Wendover, distant only ten miles, was as if it had been in a foreign country.

Yet to that place she determined to go. She knew the turnpike road leading thither, only because it was called the Wendover road.

A quarter of a mile's walk across the fields brought her into the road.

She knew that the stage coach, which ran daily between the town and village, would pass her on its way to Wendover; and thanks to Mr. Worth's kindness, she had means to pay her fare; but she dared not wait for the stage and stop it, lest she should meet the eyes of some one who might know her, for, from these, the last day's bitter experience had taught her to shrink with a shuddering fear.

She therefore determined to walk the whole way, no great undertaking for a robust woman, but weary work for the poor girl wasted to a skeleton through sickness, sorrow and imprisonment.

The day, besides, was a blustering March day, after a deep spring thaw, so she toiled along the heavy, muddy road, whose clay clogged her little old shoes, and almost dragged them off her feet; and against a high head wind that nearly blew the bonnet from her head and the thin shawl from her shoulders.

Frequently she had to sit down on a stump or a stone to rest and recover her breath.

So it was nearly night when, ready to faint with fatigue and fasting, she reached the outskirts of Wendover.

Warned by bitter experience, she dared not apply for shelter at the dwelling of any white people; but she went to the first negro hut she could find, and offered money for some supper and a place to sleep.

Here, though her face was not known, she was looked upon with degrading suspicion from the mere fact of her

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having to apply to a negro hut for shelter. And when on being asked for her name, she truly gave it, the look of suspicion was changed to one of fear and dislike.

The poor slaves were, however, tempted by the offer of money, and consented to shelter her for that night on condition that she would go away early in the morning before their "masser and missis" found out anything about her being there.

Early the next morning, according to arrangement, Marie paid her darkey hostess for her lodging and left the hut.

She spent that blustering March day in wandering through the town in search of any sort of honest service from that of a nursery governess to that of a scullery maid.

But to her bitter grief she found that her dreadful story was as well known at Wendover as at Pine Cliffs.

And from every house where she dared apply she was turned away with more or less of harshness.

She was thus confirmed in the discovery that though she had been acquitted by the jury, she was not pardoned by the community.

That night sinking with fatigue and despair, she found shelter by paying for it, in another negro hut.

The next morning with her bundle on her arm, she left Wendover by the high road, neither knowing nor caring where it should lead her, so that it should take her away from the neighborhood of her bitter misery.

It would be weary work to follow poor Marie Serafinne in her months of wretched wandering over the country; for one day was like another. Every day was spent in walking on farther and farther from the scene of her sorrows, and every night was spent in some poor negro's log hut, until three weeks of wandering had passed, and her shoes were worn out, her clothing all soiled and shattered with mud, and her money dwindled to the last dollar.

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In this wretched plight, late one afternoon she approached a lonely farm house, situated in a deep fertile hollow enclosed by high hills.

As usual she went up to the house and rapped at the door, not that she had the slightest hope of being admitted but because she never left a chance untried.

A hard-featured, care-worn woman of about forty years of age, came to the door and asked the visitor what she wanted.

"If you please, ma'am, a place," falteringly answered the weary traveller.

"What's your name?" asked the woman, in a slight German accent.

"Marie Serafinne," answered the girl, trembling with fear of the harsh repulse that had always followed the mention of her name.

But the German woman had evidently never heard of it before.

"Where did you come from?" she inquired.

"From—Pine Cliffs," answered the girl, quailing at the question.

"Don't know the place. Must be a long way from here. Got any recommendation?"

Marie paused in confusion before she replied. And then suddenly thinking of Ishmael Worth, she took his card and handed it to the woman, saying:

"That gentleman gave me leave to apply to him."

The name and fame of the great jurist and barrister had reached even this remote farm house; and the woman after reading the card told the girl she might come in.

And Marie Serafinne, thanking Heaven for the prospect of a home, followed her new mistress into a long low ceiled room, at the farther end of which was a broad fire-place, around which were gathered half a dozen boys, of ages varying from two to ten years.

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The woman then told Marie Serafinne that she wanted a girl and would try her; that she would write to Mr. Worth, and if the reference proved satisfactory, and the girl suitable, she would keep her.

Then she directed her to take off her bonnet and fall right into work, and help to get supper, as the men would soon come in from the field.

In this manner Marie Serafinne was installed in the house that was destined to be her home for many years.

CHAPTER IX.

THROUGH WEARY YEARS.

The farm, occupying the whole of a small hollow enclosed by high hills, was called "Witch Elm," from the trees that overshadowed the farm-house.

The house was very old, built of red sand stone, in an oblong form, of two stories with an attic and a sloping roof. There were four rooms on each story, divided by a middle passage running from front to back and containing the staircase.

It was furnished plainly and substantially, partly from household goods, brought over in the emigrant ship from the old country, and partly by articles made by the master's own hand.

Carl and Anna Berger, the master and mistress of the farm, were German emigrants, who had come to this country some twenty years before, and had purchased the place upon which they lived from the bankrupt planter, whose people had owned it for a century before.

The Bergers had a very large family of thirteen chil

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dren; that is, five girls and eight boys. Of the girls, two were married and gone away; two were in heaven; and one, the fifth and last, was a baby of ten months old.

So that the overtasked mistress of the house and mother of the family had not one daughter at home to help her.

The boys were all at home; but, however much they may have helped their father on the farm, they certainly only made more work for the mother in the house.

And, until the engagement of Marie Serafinne, there had not been a hired servant, male or female, on the place.

But, after the marriage and departure of her last grown daughter, a strong, healthy girl of eighteen, who had taken the largest half of the household work upon herself, Mrs. Berger saw the great need of getting "help," and so she closed with the very first offer of service that was made to her, and which happened to be made by Marie Serafinne.

She fully intended to get her husband to write to Mr. Worth, to whom the girl had referred, and in the meantime, while waiting an answer, to keep a strict watch over the stranger, who might be a thief.

So, for the first few weeks, she locked up all her pantries and presses, and gave out all the provisions herself, and counted all the clothing when it went into the wash, and afterwards when it came out.

But the letter was never written to Mr. Worth. The farmer was not in the habit of writing letters; and, after putting off the task from day to day, and then from week to week, he put it off forever.

This was to be regretted on Marie's account, however, for it cut her off the knowledge of the only friend she had in the world.

Gradually the strict habits in regard to Marie were also abandoned. It was tiresome to the mistress to be always watching and counting and locking up.

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"One might as well live in a prison," she said, "as to spend the days of their life in turning keys; and, besides, the girl is honest enough, as any one might see."

So in time Marie grew to be entirely trusted by her employers.

But they were not kind to her.

They were a money-grubbing set, hard to each other—harder still to her—their one white slave. They overburdened her with heavy tasks, for which they paid her too little to supply her with necessary clothing.

She did not mind this so much in the summer; but when winter came, she suffered with cold.

She labored early and late.

There was a large house of many rooms, every one of them occupied, to be looked after and kept clean. There was a large family of eight men and boys, two women and a child to be waited on, cooked for, washed, ironed, and cleaned for. There were seven cows to be milked, and all the butter and cheese to be made. All the bread was to be made and baked, and all the soap and candles manufactured.

Think of the immense labor!

And Marie received but little help from her mistress, who, as the months and years passed, shifted more and more of this burden upon her already overtasked servant.

But Marie Serafinne, helpless and friendless in her circumstances, meek and patient in her temper, never complained.

What, indeed, were the trials of her present hard servitude to the agonies she had once suffered and outlived?

And she never smiled. The memory of her sorrows lay too heavy on her heart. Her present life was ruined, and of her future life she never thought.

She lived and labored a grave, sad, silent woman, a mystery to all, even to those who were in daily communication with her.

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The Berger people were not very intelligent, not very much given to thinking or speaking of any other subject than such as related to money-making or money-saving; but even they, in the course of time, had come to the conclusion that the whole of Marie Serafinne's life, before she arrived among them—a life of which she never spoke—was a secret that she did not care to tell.

Nor did they care to inquire. She was too useful, indeed, too necessary to them, to make it politic to question too closely into her past.

If there were any secrets in her life that rendered her more helpless and timid, more patient in labor and humble in demands, why, so much the better for them. She would work all the harder, and for less money.

And so, as years passed, they put more and more work upon her, and paid her less and less for it.

For long years she bore her increasing burdens bravely. She arose at four o'clock every morning, two hours before any other member of the family stirred, and she worked incessantly until ten o'clock at night, and sometimes even until twelve midnight. She never got more than six hours' sleep, and often not more than four; but so great was her fatigue at the end of every day's hard work, that, as soon as she dropped upon her bed each night, she fell instantly into a profound and dreamless sleep, that, in its depth, was like a temporary death. Each morning she awoke from this state with a start and shudder, and a great dread of the day's burden to be instantly taken up and borne through eighteen or twenty hours of painful, profitless, thankless labor, and she would rather have closed her eyes, and fallen into the sleep of death, than have roused and goaded her weary, aching body to the agony of new exertion, for which she was growing more and more unfit and incapable. But

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the law of necessity was upon her, and each day, with a greater effort, she conquered her weakness and pain,

"And took up her burden of life again."

Did her mistress notice her failing health and strength?

Be sure she did; but only with anxiety on the subject of her own interests, and not at all on that of the girl's sufferings. And whenever she would observe Marie looking unusually pale and weary, and moving with unusual languor and slowness, she would say, hardly:

"I'm afraid you ain't strong enough to do my work."

This acted upon the failing and fainting woman as it was meant to act, as a sharp lash to a jaded mare, stinging her to fresh exertions.

It contained a covert threat, understood, and meant to be understood, by Marie—a threat of dismissal, to her old life of homeless, solitary wandering about the country. Sooner than brave this fate again, poor Marie would work until she should drop and die at her work.

CHAPTER X.

WONDERS AT WITCH ELMS.

THE end drew near. When Marie Serafinne had been working out this worse than penal servitude for more than ten weary years, it happened that during the eleventh winter, an extremely severe one, she took a deep cold that fell upon her lungs.

Though very ill, she did not dare to keep her bed. She knew full well that her hard task-mistress would neither tolerate an idle woman, nor be burdened with a sick one.

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So every morning, after a night of coughing, fever and restlessness, followed by a heavy perspiration, she would rise, weakened and dripping wet, and dress in her cold and fireless attic, and go shivering down stairs to light the kitchen fire and cook the breakfast. And she would keep at work through her prostration in the morning and her fever in the afternoon and evening.

Of course she grew worse and worse. And notwithstanding her best efforts, her work went behind hand.

It was now late in December, and the Christmas Holidays were at hand, when the married daughters, the sons-in-law and the grandchildren of the family were coming home for a visit.

And there was so much extra cleansing and cooking to be done that the work was almost doubled.

It was during this trying week preceding Christmas, that Marie very nearly succumbed to her weakness.

One afternoon when the last batch of pies was put into the oven, Marie dropped exhausted into her chair, and nearly fainted.

Her hard task-mistress applied the moral spur immediately.

"I'll tell you what, Marie, if you can't do better than this, you must find another place, and I must find another servant!"

Marie's thin cheek, an instant before flushed deeply with the fire of hectic fever, now grew pale as ashes, as she faltered:

"I will try—indeed I will try."

And she staggered to her feet and went to work again.

"Now mind you, Marie! I will give you till New Years. If you don't do better between this and then, you go," said her mistress.

"I will do my very best, ma'am, indeed I—" began the

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poor girl, but a violent fit of coughing stopped her words and nearly choked her breath.

And she kept her promise so well, that it was nearly twelve o'clock at night when she stopped work, and crept up to her hard bed in the cold attic.

Exhausted as she was, she could not sleep. She was too anxious, feverish and restless, and the season was too full of heart-breaking associations.

It was now only two days till Christmas. And on this night, twelve weary years before, her child had been born and strangled in Cliff Cottage!

That memory alone without fever, cough and care, was enough to have kept her awake all night.

She rolled and tossed from side to side, and called on the Lord to pity and forgive and help her.

Towards morning a feeling of utter exhaustion, a faintness unto death, came over her; yet the hour being so near daylight, she feared to yield herself to sleep, lest she should not wake early enough to rise and get the breakfast ready. But battling with this overpowering drowsiness was like battling with death. There could be but one issue. She soon fell into a deep and dreamless sleep like temporary annihilation.

Some hours later she awoke suddenly, and found the morning sun shining full into her face!

A great terror seized her, exaggerated by her own low nervous condition. She heard the family stirring. She knew that they would all be downstairs soon for their breakfast. And *she* had done nothing! Not even made the fire to boil the kettle. And she reflected, as she started up, and began to hurry on her scant clothing, on all that she had to do, at this late hour! Bread to make, hot for breakfast, bacon to cut and fry, eggs to beat up into omelettes, potatoes to bake, rice to boil. All this, that should have

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been begun two hours sooner, to do now, and the family ready to come down to the breakfast that they supposed to be smoking hot and ready for them.

Shuddering with sickening fear as much as with the bitter cold, she went downstairs.

Passing down through the middle passage, she heard the young men walking about in their rooms evidently ready to come down. And they were always as hungry and as cross as famished wolves.

Ah! for the poor, sick, friendless woman! She expected no lighter punishment than to be sent angrily away from the house, to her homeless wandering in search of a home, in this bitter winter weather!

So, wishing for death to deliver her from the ills of life, she went into the kitchen.

How great was her astonishment, and how much greater her terror at what she beheld.

There was a fine fire glowing in the great cooking stove and heating all the large kitchen. On the top of the stove a large pot of coffee was boiling and filling the room with its fragrance; two large sauce-pans, one filled with rice and one with potatoes, were steaming in company; a great pan of fried bacon and eggs was covered over to be kept warm, and a huge pan of hot rolls completed the bill of fare ready for breakfast.

Even the table was nearly set in the kitchen, and not a spoon or a fork missing! All was quite ready and not a soul to be seen!

Marie Serafinne sat down in dismay.

"The mistress has done it all herself," she said, in despair, "she is tired of talking to me and bearing with me, and now she means to act on her threat, and to turn me out of doors. Well, I—I cannot say a word! I have nothing to say! If I could only die!"

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Her miserable mourning was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Berger and several of the men.

Marie Serafinne looked up timidly to read her fate in her mistress's face.

But Mrs. Berger was looking around the kitchen in smiling approval.

"Well, Marie," she began, "you have got before hand with your work this morning. And you did it by getting up an hour earlier. I heard you bustling about down here before daylight. Now if you would always be so smart I wouldn't want a better girl!——Come! put the breakfast on the table," she added, taking up the steaming coffee-pot and setting it upon the the board.

Marie Serafinne looked at her mistress in consternation. Was Mrs. Berger making game of her?

Marie did not know, and she was too much frightened to enquire. She placed the hot dishes on the table, and stood silently waiting while the large family gathered around it and sat down.

"You were up so early, Marie, and you have done so much work this morning that you must want *your* breakfast too. Sit down now with us and take it. When you really are smart I like to reward you," said Mrs. Berger still smiling.

This was a very unusual favor, and Marie, wondering more and more what her mistress could possibly mean, sat down, and took the cup of coffee that Mrs. Berger passed out for her.

Was all this a mockery?" she asked herself. Would Mrs. Berger presen'ly turn on her and send her from the house? Marie did not know. She was thoroughly mystified. But she was very hungry, like all consumptives. And so, notwithstanding her mortification and anxiety, she ate a good substantial breakfast, and felt better and stronger for it.

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After breakfast the men dispersed to their field work, and the mistress harnessed her pony to her little wagon, and went off to the village of Peakville to make some purchases, leaving Marie to do all the house-work alone.

"I shouldn't wonder if she was going there to get another girl before she sends me away. If she is, I wish she would tell me, so I might know what to depend on," said the poor woman to herself. And, timid as she was, she braced herself to ask the question:

"Mrs. Berger, are you going to send me away?" she faintly inquired, as her mistress was about stepping into the wagon.

"No, Marie; not if you do as well as you have done this morning, I shan't send you away; but if you go lazing about the house, on account of sickness, I shall have to do it, because I don't keep a hospital, you know," answered Mrs. Berger, as she took the reins and started her pony.

Marie went back into the kitchen, less frightened but more mystified than ever.

Who had done her work that morning?

That was the question that perplexed her beyond all possibility of settlement.

However, there was a great deal of work yet to do. There was breakfast to clear away, dinner to put on to cook, and the beds to make up.

And strange to say, she felt almost strong enough to do it without fatigue.

She soon restored the kitchen to order, put on a ham to boil, and a piece of beef to roast, regulated the fire, and then went up-stairs to make up eleven beds, and clean all the rooms.

By the time she had finished the last bed and the last room, she felt very tired.

But she went down into the kitchen and washed the

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vegetables and put them on, and set the pies on the top of the stove to warm, and then laid the cloth for dinner.

Finally, she sprinkled down some clothes to iron, and then she dropped into a chair to rest while watching the pot boil.

The family all came in to dinner. It was quite ready for them; and Mrs. Berger's good humor continued.

After dinner, the men went out to their work again, and Mrs. Berger prepared to go into her sitting-room and sew, to complete a new dress for herself, to be worn at Christmas.

"Marie," she said, as soon as you have washed up the dinner dishes, I want you to make some doughnuts and jumbles for supper; and you must have some hot biscuits and rice waffles, and hash some of that cold beef and ham together for a relish. And mind, be as smart as you were this morning. Do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered the poor woman.

And as soon as her mistress had left the kitchen, Maria Serafinne recommenced her endless task.

She had felt stronger this day than any day for the last twelve months; but as it drew near night, her strength began to fail, and by the time she placed the well-cooked supper on the table, she felt almost ready to faint.

Mrs. Berger praised the cooking, but did not notice the pallor and weakness of the cook.

As she arose from the supper table, she said:

"I am going to finish my alpaca dress, Marie, so you must get along the best way you can without me this evening. After you have washed up the dishes, and scoured the kitchen floor and the dresser, I want you to iron those things you sprinkled down. It will take you till late, but you know the work must be done; and if you want to stay here, you must do it."

"Yes, ma'am," meekly replied the poor woman.

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And as her mistress left the room, Marie attempted to rise and go about her work. But she was more prostrated than she knew. As she tried once more to stand up, an overpowering faintness and drowsiness came upon her, and relaxed her limbs and weighed down her eyelids, so that she sank back in her chair, and fell into a deep and dreamless sleep of some hours' duration.

She was wakened at length by the loud voice of her mistress, calling from the next room—

"Marie! Marie! haven't you got through there yet? It's after twelve o'clock, and I have just finished my dress, and I'm going to bed! and you ought to be through with your work, too, by this time. Now hurry! because you know you have got to be up very early in the morning."

"Yes, ma'am," mechanically answered the poor woman, slowly waking up from her profound sleep to the alarming consciousness that she had slept ever since supper time, and had done none of the work that had been given her to do! Twelve, midnight, and she had not washed the dishes, nor scoured the kitchen, nor ironed the clothes that had been sprinkled down. She had not even lighted the kitchen lamp!

It was sunset when she had been overtaken by sleep, and now it was midnight, and the kitchen was as dark as pitch, but for the glowing of the fire through the crevices of the stove.

"Marie, are you through?" called her mistress again.

"No, ma'am; but I will get through as quick as ever I can," answered the girl, groping about in the dark for the box of matches to light the lamp, and trembling lest her mistress should come in and find the evening work not even begun.

"Well, then, hurry. I'm going up now! So you must mind and put out all the lights, and cover up the fire, and

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fasten up the kitchen, before you come up to bed. Do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Marie, as at length she succeeded in finding the box of matches.

She listened for a minute, until she heard Mrs. Berg going up-stairs, and then she struck the match and lighted the lamp, and looked about.

Heaven and earth! What was this?

The supper-table, as if by magic, was cleared off and set aside. The dishes were washed and put away in the glass corner cupboard. The kitchen floor and dresser were scoured white. And every copper and tin on the dresser shone brightly as gold and silver; and every shirt was ironed and hung upon the clothes-horse to air.

Marie Serafinne pressed her hands before her eyes, and then removed them and looked again.

The work was done, and done well! This was no dream or vision. It was a stubborn fact. Marie Serafinne had nothing to do but to put out the lamp and go to bed!

"What does it all mean?" she said to herself.

"*Who does my work for me?*"

In great bewilderment she extinguished the light and went up to her attic to pray and to go to rest.

She felt so greatly refreshed by her long, deep sleep in the kitchen, that she scarcely felt the need of any more sleep that night. Yet, as soon as she touched her pillow, she slept again, and slept well.

As on the previous morning, she was waked up by the first beams of the rising sun shining on her face. As before, she started up in a panic on finding that she had overslept herself. She hurried down stairs, and into the kitchen.

Wonder upon wonders!

As on the morning previous, all the work was done. The kitchen was clean, the table was set, the breakfast was cooked and smoking on the stove, ready to be dished.

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Marie Serafinne sank down in her chair, so overwhelmed with perplexity, that she felt as if she would lose her reason.

Who had done her work?

The unanswerable question almost crazed her brain. She had heard of household spirits, called "Brownies," who were said to make themselves very useful in domestic labor; but these she had considered as the creations of imagination only. Now she caught herself inquiring:

"Can it be a 'Brownie' that helps me?"

And immediately, in alarm, she exclaimed:

"I *am* going crazy, or I never should think of such a thing!"

The entrance of the family recalled her to practical duties. She put the breakfast on the table, and prepared to wait on those who sat down. But again she was invited with unusual kindness to sit down and partake of the meal with them.

And with silent gratitude she availed herself of the privilege.

This was Christmas eve. And upon this day all the married daughters, with their husbands and children, were expected to arrive. And in the course of the day they came, one party after another.

And the work for that day was quadrupled.

But Marie Serafinne found strength to do all that was required of her; or if her strength flagged when she happened to be at work in a room by herself, she would be overpowered by drowsiness, and after a restful sleep of several hours, she would wake to find her work all done!

By degrees she reconciled herself to this most mysterious help; and her health and strength visibly improved, and consequently, to her mistress's great approbation, her usefulness increased.

"She only wanted rousing! If I had indulged that girl's

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business, she would have moped herself into a consumption, sure enough. Now see how well she is!" said Mrs. Berger to her oldest married daughter, as they sat at their sewing one afternoon early in January.

But little did either mother or daughter suspect but that Marie Serafinne did all that vast amount of labor with her own hands!

Marie Serafinne, since the days of her darkest misfortunes, had always been a very silent woman. Now, she was even more silent than ever before. She brooded over the inexplicable mystery of her life.

"*Who did her work?*"

When her unfinished task dropped from her fainting hands, *who took it up and completed it for her?*

She could not even surmise. She had ascertained, beyond all question, that no member of the family did. She had tested the matter by searching the room and then locking herself in it alone, on more than one occasion, when she had fallen asleep, slept an hour or more, and waked up to find her work all done.

No, it was no member of the family.

Who was it then?

She would have given her life to know.

The Christmas holidays passed, the married daughters, with their juveniles, left their father's house for their own. And "Witch Elms" returned to its former comparative quiet.

And still, though now there was not so much occasion for help, Marie Serafinne found it. And she grew better and younger and happier every day. But one thing troubled her—anxiety to solve the supernatural mystery of her life.

The winter passed away.

And the spring came, bringing a strange sense of renovated life to the poor servant at Witch Elm's.

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Every one noticed now, how very pretty she was growing Will Berger, the youngest of the boys, just growing up into manhood, and ten years younger than Marie Serafinne, took the fancy to fall in love with her, and he did it. But instead of asking Marie for herself, he asked his mother for her.

This proposal did not strike the German woman as it does us. True, Marie Serafinne was only a servant, and ten years older than her suitor, and without a dollar in the world. But then she was very pretty and lady-like, and had a power of work in her that would be money in the pocket of a laboring farmer. And besides, if Marie was ever to be married, as such a fair woman was apt to be, it would be better for them that she should marry one of their own lads, and remain at home to work for them, than that she should marry a stranger and go away, taking all her usefulness with her.

So the German mother told her son that he was welcome to marry Marie Serafinne, on condition that they should both remain on the farm and work for the family as before.

The boy consented to this proposal, and went off in a strikingly forward, practical way in search of Marie. He found her "in the soapsuds" busy with the family washing, and he asked her plainly to marry him.

She stared in mute astonishment a full minute, and then flatly refused.

He went off with his story of disappointment to his mother.

And she told him not to despair, but to have patience, and he might win his sweetheart after all.

Meantime summer waned into autumn, and autumn faded into winter. Christmas holidays were again approaching, and all the married daughters, with their families, were coming to pay their annual visit to their parents at "Witch Elms."

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Again the work at the farm-house was doubled, and quadrupled as Christmas day drew near.

But this additional labor made no difference to Marie Serafinne, who received mysterious help according to her need. She had no trouble but the constant longing desire to know who her secret helper could be.

There was one night, in every year, that was very terrible to the poor woman. This was the night of Christmas Eve, the anniversary of the birth and death of her child. It was on the eleventh anniversary of this tragedy that her mysterious helper had first came.

A year had rolled around since then, and her helper had never failed her. She had grown accustomed to the secret supernatural aid, but had not become reconciled to her ignorance of the identity of the agent.

"*Who does my work, when my own arm fails?*" she asked herself many times, and asked in vain.

"If I could only see, hear, feel, or even dimly perceive, my helper!" she would sigh, and sigh to no purpose.

The year had rolled around again. The twelfth anniversary of the birth and death of her child, and the second anniversary of the coming of her supernatural helper was at hand.

Marie Serafinne, the last one about the house to retire, crept up to her attic and went to bed.

But on this night she could not sleep. On this anniversary she never could. She lay thinking of the piteous fate of her little babe, born and dead in one night, twelve years before! Whether it was that her nerves were unusually weak, or her mind unusually morbid, I do not know; but she lay and wept for pity.

Then a strange thing happened to her—a soft, light hand, soft and light as a rose leaf touched her forehead and passed down over her face. The touch stilled and awed, but did not frighten her.

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"*Who is it?*" she whispered faintly.

There was no answer, but the light hand passed softly to and fro over her face.

"*Who is it?*" she asked again in a voice faint with fear.

A sort face bent down to her and touched her.

"*Who is it?*" she gasped in almost dying tones.

Then answered a low, tender, almost inaudible voice:

"*Wake up. Wake up.*"

"*I am awake. Who is it? Is it you, my Helper?*" she breathed as if she were breathing her last.

Then came the mysterious voice again, low, tender, infinitely compassionate.

"*What is the matter? Wake up.*"

She tried to speak again; but her breath was almost gone; her heart had almost ceased to beat. With a supernatural effort she whispered her last question:

"Who are you? Who are you?"

Then came the final answer, low, sweet, sad, as the softest note of the Eolian harp:

"*The child you bore in Pine Cliffs, a dozen years ago.*"

* * * * * * * * *

They called her mad. Her mania was harmless enough, but they were afraid of her. Mad people were very uncertain. Sometimes they broke out very dangerously, or fatally, and cut throats, and set houses on fire. And so they cast about for some means of securing this woman who told them that she was helped every day in her work by her spirit child.

They dared not turn her out of doors now. She might come back some night and burn down the house over their heads.

Nor could they send her to prison, for she had committed no offence.

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So they cast about for some legal method of restraining her, and mean time they watched her very closely.

They detected nothing in her, unusual, except a tendency to sleep walking. They found that she often arose in the night and accomplished great feats of labor while in a state of somnambulency, but when taxed in the morning with her nightly performances, she would firmly deny that she had ever stirred out of her bed, and as firmly maintain that her spirit child had done the work.

On this ground they charged her with insanity, and lived in constant fear of her doing them some fatal injury, and they watched her day and night, and studied how they should rid themselves of her with safety.

At length it occurred to Carl Berger to write to the only person Marie Serafinne had ever referred to as a friend—namely, Mr. Ishmael Worth, of Richmond.

Mr. Berger wrote a letter and posted it himself.

The letter was answered by Ishmael Worth in person.

He came down to the farm and expressed much interest in the Marie Serafinne, whom he had never forgotten, but whom he always remembered as the most interesting client he had ever been called upon to defend.

He told the Bergers nothing of her trial at Pine Cliffs, but he called himself her friend, and asked to see her.

She was sent into him.

The meeting between Marie and the benefactor who had saved her life, was very affecting.

Marie Serafinne wept and kissed his hands and would have kissed the soles of his shoes, if he would have permitted it.

He asked her about herself, and she told him of her long wanderings and of her finding a home at length at Witch Elms, of the hard work that had worn her almost to death until the last year, when her spirit child had helped

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her, adding in relation to this last astounding information—"I know you will think I am crazy, Mr. Worth, for indeed I should have thought so, two years ago, of any one who should have told me such a thing of themselves, but indeed I am not crazy, Mr. Worth. And I know that my child is now a maiden beautiful and strong, who lives in the spirit world, but comes daily to help me with my hard work in this!

"Have you ever seen her? inquired Mr. Worth, humoring her fancy.

"No, never seen her! but I have heard her sweet voice and felt her soft hand, and more than all, *I have perceived her presence* through some sense that I do not myself understand and cannot therefore describe," she answered firmly.

Ishmael Worth did not dispute her words. He fell into deep thought. He was sufficiently interested in this case to consent to remain twenty-four hours in the farm house to attend to it.

Later on the same evening, while Marie Serafinne was in the kitchen preparing supper, he had an interview with Mr. and Mrs. Berger, in their common sitting-room. He told them that their young friend was probably a somnambulist who did not understand her own case, a condition which would account rationally for everything that was otherwise inexplicable in her case; that her mind was certainly in an abnormal condition and that she required special medical treatment. He would recommend her removal to the "Good Samaritan Asylum for the Insane," and would himself undertake to persuade her to go there, where also, he would cheerfully defray all the expenses of her treatment.

And thus it was arranged through the benevolence of Ishmael Worth, that poor Marie Serafinne entered as a first class patient the famous Asylum of the Good Samaritan.

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There was, however, a secret known to Ishmael Worth, regarding his poor protegée, that he did not care to confide either to the Berger family or to Marie Serafiune herself. For he could not tell the Berger family without bringing to light and exposing all Marie Serrafiune's early sorrows and humiliations; and he could not tell Marie herself without inflicting upon her bitter grief and regret. The secret was this—that her husband had turned up, six months after her departure from Pine Cliffs, where he heard with horror and amazement of her trial for the murder of her own infant child. He learned farther that though she had been acquitted by the jury, she had been actually driven from her native village by the force of public reprobation! He then sought far and wide for news of his lost wife, but found none.

He at length went to Richmond to confer with the noble and humane counsel who had gratuitously defended her

But Ishmael Worth was as much shocked as was Talbot himself at hearing of Marie's flight from Pine Cliffs. He could give no information of the fugitive; but he offered every assistance in his power towards tracing her.

In the presence of the man stricken with grief and remorse, Ishmael Worth forbore to express the detestation he had felt for the heartless desertion which had plunged the poor young wife into such unutterable horrors.

And soon he felt glad of his forbearance, when Talbot, in a voice broken down by sorrow, explained the reason of his apparent abandonment of his wife.

He had left her, he said, in a fit of boyish anger, because she refused to leave her selfish and grasping old grandam, to go with him to his own home in the city.

But when he reached his home his short lived anger was succeeded by compunctions and grief, and he wrote an affectionate letter to Marie. But he never got an answer to

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that letter, which of course was never received by Marie Serafinne. After waiting a week, he wrote a second letter; but before there was time to hope for an answer to that, he received a letter from Leeds, in England, summoning him to the death bed of his father, who was sinking to the grave with a lingering disease. He wrote a third letter, apprising his wife of the necessity of his sudden voyage, and promising to return and claim her as soon as he possibly could get away.

He went to England and to the city of Leeds, where his father was a wealthy manufacturer.

He was detained there many weeks in attendance on the death bed of his only surviving parent, and even after having closed his father's eyes and laid his body in the grave, he was detained many weeks longer in settling up the vast estate to which he was the sole heir.

He had no taste for the business at which his father had made a fortune, so he sold it out to a good company, and with the proceeds of the sale he returned to this country a very wealthy man, to invest his money and to claim his wife.

The dreadful news of her trial for infanticide met and nearly killed him. In leaving her, he had not had the faintest suspicion that she was likely to become a mother. How overwhelming then was the horrible information that she had borne a child, and had been tried for its murder, and that she had fled from her native village, pursued by the reprobation of the whole community!

"See here, Mr. Worth," he had said, in conclusion—

"If you blame me without measure, for all the woe my carelessness has caused, you will do right. But, if you think me now remorseless, look at my hair. I am twenty-three years old. When I came back from the old country I had not a gray hair in my head. Look at it now!"

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His hair was, indeed, half gray, and his face was that of a care-worn, grief-bowed, middle-aged man!

"I pity you from the bottom of my heart. But we must not lose our time in idle regrets. We must try to find your wife," said Ishmael Worth earnestly.

And they did try to find her. They advertised widely, offering large rewards for any information respecting her. But Marie Serafinne, buried in the lonely farm house among the mountains of the northwest corner of Virginia, where no traveller ever called and no newspaper ever came, could not be found by advertisement.

At length, Mr. Talbot started on a tour of search in person. He began at Pine Cliffs and traced her to Wendover, but there he lost the clue, and never found it again.

At the end of three years he reappeared at Mr. Worth's office in Richmond. He had given up the search in despair, and was going to Italy to try and divert his thoughts from remorse that was deranging his mind, by studying the different schools of art at Rome.

He took leave of Mr. Worth, and embarked by the next outward bound steamer. Since that, eleven years had passed, during which Ishmael Worth had heard nothing further from Talbot. He did not even know if the artist was then living; and in fact, from Talbot's long silence, Mr. Worth rather inclined to the belief that he was dead.

Such was the explanation that Ishmael Worth gave to the physician in charge of the asylum, at the time of his placing Marie Serafinne under his care; but which he withheld from Marie herself, lest it should only bring her sorrow and regret, until he would by writing to our consuls abroad, seek and find some definite news of Talbot's fate.

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CHAPTER XI.

BACK TO LIFE AND LOVE.

"And this is all?" I inquired, as the doctor finished his story.

"Yes; for she remains precisely in the same state in which she was when she entered the institution; and her circumstances and prospects are the same.

"Mr. Worth has written, I believe, to every American minister and every consul in Europe, Asia, and Africa, without obtaining any news of the present whereabouts of the artist Talbot. He is still pursuing his investigations, but with little hope of success. The last heard of Talbot was, that he had spent a winter, eleven years ago, in Rome, and had left in the spring for a tour in Switzerland. There all trace of him was lost."

"But she is happy," I said, with a sigh of relief.

"Yes; her hallucination makes her happy," he answered.

It was after ten o'clock, and I got up and thanked Dr. Abbott for his story, and bade him good-night.

I looked in at the nursery, on my way to my room, to see what had kept my cousin Nellie away from the drawing-room all the evening. I found her still engaged with her teething baby, to whom the doctor was just administering some simple medicine. I bade them good-night also, and went on to my room to go to bed and dream of Maria Serafinne.

The next morning every trace of the night-storm h disappeared.

The sky was perfectly clear; the air, keen and cold.

It was good Christmas weather, and Christmas was drawing near.

I joined the family at breakfast; and after breakfast, as

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my own request, I was permitted to make a visit to Marie Serafinne, attended by young Doctor Abbott.

We found Marie sitting by the window of her room, looking out over the wintry sea.

She silently extended her hands to us, and her face was so radiant with happiness, that the young doctor exclaimed:

"Why, Marie, you look as if you were delighted to see us."

"I am. I have had much good news."

"Ah! indeed! What news have you had, Marie, and who brought it to you?" inquired the doctor, humoring her, as if she had been a baby.

Marie Serafinne's voice sank to a low tone, as she answered:

My child brought me the news. Before I was well awake this morning, I heard her sweet voice close to my ear. She said to me, "Do you know you will be married soon? *I* do."

"So you are to be married, Marie? It must be to me, then, for I am the only young man who ever comes to see you. Are you going to marry *me*, Marie? inquired the young doctor.

She looked at him in grave surprise for a minute, and then answered, gently:

"No, Dr. Abbott; of course not. There is only one in the world I can possibly marry, and that one is not you."

"I am very sorry," said the young man, laughing good-humoredly, as he arose to attend me from the room.

In the corridor outside we met Dr. Hamilton, who was hurrying toward us in considerable agitation.

"Have you seen Marie Serafinne this morning?" he hastily inquired.

"We have just left her," answered Dr. Abbott.

"How is she?"

"Not quite so well this morning. A little excited. Thinks she has had a fresh communication from her child."

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"Ah! ah! I am sorry to hear that! especially just now. The fact is, Mr. Worth is down-stairs, and with him a stranger, who has come to see Marie Serafinne."

"Stop!" said I, breathlessly; a stranger to see Marie Serafinne?" You don't mean to say that he is—he is—"

"Her missing husband? Yes, that is just exactly who he is. But I must see Marie Serafinne myself before I can permit her to be excited by such a visit," answered the doctor, as he went past us, and entered Marie's room.

We waited anxiously in the corridor for his return.

At the end of ten minutes he came out with a look of astonishment on his face.

"Would you believe it? She was prepared for this visit! She received me smilingly, told me she knew what I had come to announce, that her child had told her about it! So you see I had nothing to do but to ask her when she would receive Mr. Talbot. She answered, with delight, that she would receive him now!"

"And are you going to take him up to her room?" rather anxiously inquired Dr. Abbott.

"Yes, immediately," answered the elder physician, as he preceded us down stairs.

We all went into the drawing-room together, where we found Mr. Worth and the stranger in conversation with my cousin, Eleanor.

Mr. Worth I had seen before, and so I greeted him as an old acquaintance. He introduced his companion, Mr. Talbot.

And I curtsied to a tall, spare, grey-haired man really but thirty-seven years of age, but looking fifty, and very unlike the raven-haired, dark-eyed young Adonis of fourteen years ago, who had fascinated the little beauty of Cliff Cottage nearly to her destruction.

We had scarcely exchanged the usual words of greeting

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when Dr. Hamilton invited Mr. Talbot to walk up stairs with him, and they left the room together.

Mr. Worth remained with us.

So none of us saw the meeting between the long severed husband and wife. But we afterwards heard something about it. We heard that Dr. Hamilton had left Mr. Talbot at the door of his wife's room, and that the artist had entered that room alone.

She was expecting him, and she received him with calm delight.

But he was quite overcome by the sight of her, and by the remembrance of the terrible suffering he had brought upon her. And when he would have humbled himself at her feet, and implored her pardon for the great wrongs he had done her, and besought her to listen to his explanation of his apparent abandonment, she prevented him by gently replying that she was well assured he had never been in fault, and that she needed to hear no defence from his lips.

The next day Mr. Talbot removed his beautiful wife from the asylum. Mr. Worth accompanied them as far as New York, whence they embarked for Liverpool, because Mr. Talbot had determined to fix their future residence in England, where the terrible story of Marie Serafinne's early life was unknown.

* * * * * *

Some years have passed since their settlement in London. I have heard of Mrs. Talbot recently as a spirit medium of great power. She shows no signs of mental derangement, unless it be her persistent belief that she is in constant communication with her spirit-child. But if that belief is a proof of insanity, there are about half a million of lunatics at large in the United States, holding seances, exhibiting signs and wonders, and calling themselves Modern Spiritualists.

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KRISS KRINGLE.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was Christmas morning. The sun was shining brightly on the new-fallen snow. It was just cold enough to freeze. The sleigh-bells were ringing merrily. The children were having a gay time, skating and coasting, and playing tricks on passers-by.

Hunting for some new amusement, they spied, coming slowly and cautiously down the street, an old man. One of the boys whispered: "Drop some torpedoes on the pavement, and let Old Sime step on them. Won't it be jolly to see him skipping and jumping!"

"Oh, Eugene! you better not. It might hurt him badly. I'd rather not make fun out of old folks," answered one of Eugene's companions.

"Oh, fudge! You have not a bit of spunk, and talk just like a girl. I'll do it, sure."

A few more moments, and the poor old man came near, stepping on the torpedoes, started back, let go of his stick, and fell forward on the bricks. He lay so still, the boys feared they had killed him.

Another eye besides theirs witnessed the accident and its cause. A young girl stood in the bay window of the mansion before which the old man had fallen; another instant and she came running down the marble steps, and, unmindful of her costly attire, the rich silk that fell in heavy folds about her form, she sank down beside the old man, exclaiming:

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"For shame, boys! Come, Eugene, and help me raise him. Nay, he must be carried. Go bring Brown here."

A moment or two after, Eugene returned, followed by a large, strong-looking man who, in obedience to the girl's command, raised and bore to the house the inanimate form of the poor old stranger.

"Gently, gently, Brown! Place him on the lounge," she said.

Restoratives were applied. Tenderly he was cared for; and, after a short time, the kind girl's efforts were successful. The old man opened his eyes, and looked inquiringly into her face. She explained the accident, and was holding a glass of wine to his lips, when a servant came in the room, bearing on a silver waiter a card. She looked at it and said:

"Tell Mr. Grainger I will be up very soon. Ask mamma to entertain him."

Fifteen minutes passed, and still she lingered with the suffering man. He was lame, and the fall had occasioned such severe pain to the afflicted limb that he had fainted. It was impossible for him to walk at all, just then.

A rustle of silken robes, and Mrs. Cameron glided into the room, and stood looking with perfect amazement on the scene before her. Kneeling beside the lounge, alternately bathing the face and placing wine to the lips of the miserable old man, was her daughter.

"Florence!—who?—what is the meaning of this?" she asked.

The gentle girl explained, and her mother said:

"One of the servants could have attended to him. If he is able to be moved now, you had better send word to the proper authorities, and have him carried to his home, or the alms-house."

"But, mamma, *we* are the proper ones to attend him.

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Eugene and his companions are accountable for his suffering."

The old man said something in a low, feeble voice, and Florence, who was best close to catch the words.

"He will go home," he says. "Well, you must wait a little longer, and I will have the carriage—"

"A carriage! If you please, Florence, send Brown to procure one," Mrs. Cameron said. As she turned to leave the room, she continued: "Mr. Grainger will feel flattered by your conduct."

"Send him here, mamma. I know he will think I'm doing right."

A few moments more, and Carl Grainger came into the room. Florence's sweet, bright face, that had been raised to greet him, was suddenly clouded. She saw that she had mistaken her lover—for, with an expression of contempt, which he could not, or cared not to hide, he looked on the suffering man. Scarce had Mr. Grainger passed the compliments of the day, when again the door opened, and another young man entered. He was not strikingly handsome, like the other, but his was the face of one that children love to linger near, women confide in, and men trust.

"Excuse me, but I have permission," he said. "Mrs. Cameron told me you were entertaining your guests here."

Turning to greet Mr. Grainger, the young man saw the sufferer on the lounge.

"Who have you here? Are you hurt, sir?" he said, going up to the side of the old man and taking his hand.

Briefly Florence told of his fall; and the look of admiration, nay, almost adoration, which beamed in William Hartley's eyes as they sought hers, ought to have been the balm to entirely heal the wound caused by Carl Grainger's look. But it was not, just then, for Florence had thought more of the handsome Carl than any of the other young men who

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visited the house. She was dreadfully disappointed to know him so different from her thoughts.

The old man signified his desire to go; and when Brown returned with a carriage, William Hartley, with almost womanly gentleness, assisted him in, and urged that he might accompany him home. An approving look from Florence, and he jumped in, closed the door, and ordered the driver to the street and number directed.

"God bless you! You are a good child. I shall never forget this day. Perhaps I'll come to see you again some time," the old man said, when leaving.

The same contemptuous expression was again on Carl's face, and he said, sneeringly:

"Quite a distinguished acquisition to Miss Cameron's list of acquaintances!"

A deep flush mantled her fair brow, but she deigned no word of reply. Carl Grainger saw he had been indiscreet, to say the least, and endeavored, by putting forth his most fascinating powers, to cast away the cloud that had gathered on the face usually so bright. Carl's attempts were fruitless. But when an hour had passed, and William Hartley returned, then, to his great chagrin, he saw a softer light glow in her dark eyes, and her lips wreathed with smiles that he had failed to draw forth.

That night Carl Grainger, determined to know his fate, asked Florence to be his wife, and, to her parents' great disappointment, she kindly but firmly said she "could not love him."

He was not what she had believed him, and her heart fled, affrighted. She dared not trust it to his keeping. William Hartley caught it in the rebound. Florence had always a warm regard for him, that might have long before ripened into true love. But the fascinating Carl had stepped in, and, for the time, made a deep impression on the trusting

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girl. To her he was so devoted, gentle, and she believed him noble and good. That Christmas-day the mask had fallen, and she knew him as he really was. William Hartley, seeing the change in Florence's manners, gained hope. Renewing his endeavors to win the sweet girl's love, he was soon confident of success, and a few weeks after the dismissal of Carl Grainger, Florence was his promised wife.

"Foolish girl! Do you not know that, besides his own fortune, Mr. Grainger is the only heir of an old uncle, who is fabulously rich?" said Mrs. Cameron.

Florence's father's disappointment was as keen as his wife's, for he felt his foundation trembling, and knew before long it must fall. And so it was: before another year had passed the stately mansion was no longer his. He was almost penniless. But he was a true, loving father, and would not barter his child's heart for gold.

And so, when William Hartley won Florence, he took her not from a home of luxury, but one as humble as his own. Years rolled by, bringing with them joy and sorrow, until six had passed. During the last one clouds had gathered, swift and dark, over William Hartley and his loved ones; and so on Christmas morning, six years after the one when the strange old man was helped by Florence, they were absolutely destitute.

"I wonder what has become of that old man?" said William, during the day. "I called a few days after I took him home, to inquire how he was getting on, but he had gone from that place."

"Do you know, William, to that old man's sufferings you are indebted for your wife? That day I saw the difference between you and Carl Grainger. His heartlessness frightened me, and I fled to you, and grew calm and happy," said Florence, while a beautiful flush spread over her face, chasing away the care worn look of a few moments before.

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"You fled to poverty, toil, suffering. Oh! my darling, I hoped to have sheltered you from such."

"I fled from worse. Come, cheer up, all will be well. I did not tell you, the last time I was out, I saw Grainger very much intoxicated. He is living now entirely on his expectations."

"Mamma, mamma! Kriss Kringle's coming! See! See! Hurra! Old Kriss liked to have forgotten us, I guess!" cried little Willie, shouting and clapping his hands.

Florence arose to look out, when a knock sounded on the door; opening which, she beheld standing before her the old man of whom she had just been speaking.

"Come in! I am glad to see you! Where have you been this long time? And how did you find us?" Florence asked, taking his hand and drawing him in.

"I found very easily what I had never *lost*. I've thought of you often, but chose to come to-day. It is a good time to come," answered the old man.

"Come! sit down here," said William, getting up and offering his own comfortable chair.

"Wait a bit. If I sit down, I don't want to get up soon. Better know first how long I can stay," answered the old man, still standing.

"As long as you like. We are poor, very poor, but if you want a home with us, we will not send you forth. Sit down," answered William.

"The same! unchanged!" murmured the stranger.

"What shall we call you?" asked Florence.

"Kriss Kringle! The children called me so. Let them continue. And—you may say Uncle, if you prefer," he said.

A comical expression was on his face, smiles continued to play about his thin lips, and he seemed very happy.

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When Florence went out to prepare the frugal dinner, the old man called the children, and listened to their lisping voices. William was watching, very much amused, when the old man's words were whispered, and little Willie, seeming to understand, lowered his tone, and the heads of the old and the young were close together, at some mysterious plotting.

The father's amusement was soon changed to the greatest amazement when, soon after, as Florence came back, Willie ran up, exclaiming:

"Christmas gift for mamma and papa too! Kriss Kringle sent them to you!"

It was only a little roll of paper. Opening which they found, told in words never plainer, "No more poverty! no more toiling!" Many thousands of dollars they held in their hands.

They could not speak at first. But after a while, when they poured forth their thanks, Kriss Kringle said:

"Your home is mine! you and yours are mine All I have is for you! You won it six years ago, both of you. And that day, you had another friend with you. I knew him by name before; I learned his nature then. I heard his remark when I was going out. Ha! ha! He lost something then, didn't he? Eh?"

Florence and William thought the old man was very shrewd to have read the hearts of all, that Christmas-day. But he meant not what they thought. They knew it in after years.

"Go, make our children happy!" he urged. "And, my good child, take this," handing her more money, "and make the poor old folks you meet, and the little children who are looking longingly in at the gay windows, make them happy too."

Oh, what a joyous Christmas it was!

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For five years the old man dwelt with them, and then he sank calmly to sleep, loving hearts and gentle hands soothing him.

And then, from a lawyer of high standing, came the startling information that William Hartley and Florence were the only heirs to all the immense wealth of old Mark Grainger. Then, too, it was, they knew that Carl's heartlessness, and rude and unkind speech had wrecked all his prospects of ever possessing his uncle's wealth. He knew it, too, when the news reached him. In the will there was but one request: "Make the old folks and the children happy," it was. They follow his bidding. Every Christmas-day finds them doing the work they love so well.

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A NEW YEAR'S SURPRISE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was New-year's morn. Andrew Foster was up much earlier than usual; in truth, he might as well have remained up during the night, for, although his head rested on a downy pillow, sleep never visited him during those long, last hours of the old year, nor the first of the infant successor. At the best of times, when a man's or woman's heart is free from the burden of a disapproving conscience, there is something deeply impressive about "old-year's night." As we watch, passing, passing so swiftly, dying out, those last moments, how many a heart is filled with vain regrets! But there is another chance—a better time, we say: the morrow we will begin anew, make amends for the past, to him or her. Yet, O! if, with the passing year, that one that we might have made happier has gone too—gone beyond recall—then ours are ceaseless regrets.

It was not thus, however, with Andrew Foster. The particular one whose happiness he had marred still was with him. Daily, he saw the face, once so bright and beautiful, growing paler; missed the merry, bird-like voice that filled the house with the sweetest music! Yes; although he knew she was fading under his hard, unbending will, he would not bring her back to life—aye; for what is life without love? Constantly during those midnight hours, as vainly he wooed sleep, there would come instead the plaintive little face, with the great beseeching looking eyes Why would he not yield? Why, because pride said Nay. Could he, Andrew Foster, one of the wealthiest men of the

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city, give his child to one so far beneath her in position, and possessing nothing more than his own good name?

Harry Landon was one of her father's clerks; and Gertie Foster, despite the great gulf between them, grew to love, with all the devotion of her nature, the handsome young man. Every one liked Harry, and respected him; and no one in Andrew Foster's employ possessed more fully his confidence. Many times he would remark to friends, "Landon is a fine fellow! a noble fellow!" But when the truth came to the proud father that this young man had dared to love his child, his opinion must have undergone a great change, for he could scarcely restrain his wrath sufficiently to treat, with any show of decent politeness, Harry Landon, when he came to him in a manly, truthful manner, and told his love.

"Have you presumed to tell Miss Foster this, sir?" asked the indignant father.

"No, sir. I came to you first, scarcely daring to hope you would give me permission to speak. Still, there was a possibility, and I seized it. But I am sure Miss Foster is not ignorant of my feelings—"

"Why, why are you sure, sir?"

"Why? Oh, sir! why do the blind know that the sun is shining, when their whole being is filled with its warmth? Need we tell them what it is? Every true woman knows when she is beloved. Her heart tells her. Oh, sir, I ask you not to give her to me now—not until I can prove my worthiness. But let me speak to her."

"Impossible! I never will consent. 'Tis useless to to say more on the subject. And after this conversation I suppose you will not feel so well contented in your position with our house."

"I was about to ask, sir, if you would give me letters of introduction to some other establishment!"

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"Certainly, certainly, Landon. I will see that you have a position quite as good, to say the least, as your present one. I—I am sorry this has happened. I am your friend in every other way. You must remember and command my services when you wish."

And so the young man and his employer parted.

Days passed until a fortnight had elapsed, and Gertie had not seen Harry Landon. She missed him from the store too, and with her usual straightforward, candid manner, she went to her father and asked:

"Where is Harry Landon, father?"

"He has left us, for a better position at Black's," answered her father, with his eyes still on his paper.

"Why did he leave you, father? I heard you say you were going to do more for him."

Andrew Foster raised his eyes then, and looking sternly into his daughter's, replied:

"He presumed too far on my friendship, and it was desirable to both him and myself that he should seek employment elsewhere."

Her beautiful, truthful eyes were still gazing into his with an eager, anxious expression. She sunk down on a stool at his feet, leaned her head caressingly against him a moment, and then whispered, with a blush suffusing her pretty, child-like face:

"Father, did he tell you that he loved your daughter? And was it *that* you sent him away for?"

"Yes, Gertie. He might have known I could not listen for a moment to his suit. He is a very worthy young man: but really it was very presuming in him to—"

"Presuming, father, in an honorable, worthy man to love me? I don't think it so. I feel honored by the love of such a one. And, father, he has told you his secret; I will do so too. Although he may never know it, I love Harry Landon."

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There was much said between the father and child, she gently pleading for her love, he chiding and unyielding. A year had gone by since then. Occasionally Gertie would meet Harry Landon on the street. Once they stood side by side at the church door, and Gertie could not resist placing her hand in his, and notwithstanding the probability of Mrs. Grundy's declaring it very unmaidenly, she whispered

"I know all. And though I may never be yours, I will never wed another."

Harry was nearer happiness, then, than he had dreamed of ever being again. Now that he was assured of her love, her constancy, he would hope, and work on.

As Andrew Foster stood before the window that New Year's morning, looking out on the passers-by, many pleasant looking faces greeted him with a smile, and "Happy New-year, sir."

A moment more, and the room door was thrown open, and his boy, his only one, the youngest of his children, came running up, crying out:

"Happy New-year for papa! See, papa. Eddie's happy. New-year's day, with new clothes, new boots, new everything. I am going to be a *new boy*, too. Gertie says everybody must try to make somebody happy to-day! I am going to make Nellie happy, for I'll stop teasing her. I wish! —Oh, I wish mamma was here." His blue eyes filled with tears and his lips quivered, and in a sorrowful voice he continued: "I wish I had been a new boy when mamma was here."

Was everybody striving to place before him, hold up for his inspection, his harshness? Was every word intended to deal a sure blow? When the little seven year old Eddie spoke of "mamma," Andrew Foster could scarce repress a groan.

She was gone. Two years before she had passed from

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earth. Oh, if she was with him, how different he would be! He had been a good husband, and the gentle wife could not find in him anything to reproach. But *he* knew how much was left undone. How many little loving acts, that make life so doubly sweet, were forgotten then.

Again Eddie's voice sounded in the father's ear.

"Papa, are you going to be a new man to-day? Papa, make *me* happy first with a splendid pair of skates. And Nellie and Gertie must be happy too, papa. Make Gertie be a new girl, please. She won't sing and play with us; she's getting old, I believe."

No argument, no pleading, no matter how earnest, could have made such an impression on Andrew Foster as that child's innocent prattle.

Again the door opened, and Gertie and Nellie were beside him. The kisses were given and received. The father saw his child was striving to be cheerful, and not cast her shadow over him.

He told them all to speak their wish, what he should give them that day. Eddie and Nellie were quick to tell, but Gertie said, with a smile that threatened to be a tear:

"Give me what you choose, father. You give me so much, I have no wish to speak; but—" She hesitated—she almost dared to breathe it forth. No, no; she would not cloud his heart that day. She cast aside the wild hope, and continued: "Bring me what you think I'd like; I trust to your decision."

After breakfast he said:

"You will lay aside your deep mourning to-day, my child, and help me receive my friends. We shall have many, I think."

She promised she would; but her father knew it would be an unpleasant task—that Gertie would much sooner spend the day quietly with her little ones, or in acts of love and mercy.

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The guests were all gone. The tiresome day was nearly over. Gertie had thrown herself wearily into an arm-chair. There was no longer need for dissembling; the forced smiles could die away; she could rest and weep. The children had been made happy. Her father had given all save her the New-year presents. She had not cared for any, but she had held a lingering hope that he might come to her with a word that would break the long silence, that she might plead anew with him.

Andrew Foster had closely watched his child, as she did, with so much dignity and grace, the honors of his elegant establishment. And he saw, through the mask she wore, never so plainly was visible the changes that the last year had wrought in her beautiful face.

When he saw her sink so wearily into the chair, his heart smote him, and he went out quickly. Possibly he feared, should he linger, he might grow weak and relent.

Gertie heard the hall door close, and she knew her father had gone out for the evening, likely.

How long she remained she knew not, dreaming. Not *sleeping* dreams were they. Her mood of depression had taken wings, and she was smiling gently, sweetly. Visions of happier times were before her.

A cautious step approached. She heard it, yet moved not, nor opened her eyes. She wished not to throw off the sweet influence which was over her.

He, her father, bent gently, lovingly over her, and murmured:

"She is sleeping and happy now. Gertie!" he called softly.

"Father, I've not been sleeping," she answered softly.

"I thought you were, and dreaming—"

"I *was* dreaming happy dreams—vain, fleeting visions," she said, her voice filled with sadness.

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"Have you forgotten your New-year's gift I was to bring you, Gertie?" he asked.

"No, sir; I thought *you* had. Have you brought me one?" she asked, forcing a show of interest.

"Yes, little daughter, I have brought it: I have never for a moment ceased to think of it. It has been a subject of much weight. You left it to my decision, and I wished to be sure of pleasing you. Now put your arms around me, and give me a kiss—one of Gertie's old loving caresses—and then go. Look in the library, and find your New-year's gift," her father said, his whole form trembling with emotion.

She was again a child, clinging lovingly about him; forgetting for the time, all but her father's effort to please her. She knew not why it was, but she saw and felt his agitation; and she strove to calm and make him happy.

"Go, go now, darling; you are still my own Gertie."

"Yes, yes, papa, your own Gertie," she said, with another caress.

"Some one will soon rob me of my darling," he said, smiling sadly.

"Not likely, papa," she answered; thinking. "I shall never leave him. Oh! why will he not relent?"

She opened the door, passed through the hall, and entered the library. The father strained his ear to catch the sound of joyous surprise. He hears it. It falls on his ear and sinks into his heart, and he murmured:

"Gone! Mine no longer!"

Seeking her father's gift, she raised her eyes, and there, smiling, standing before her, his arms put forth to welcome her, was Harry Landon.

She could not realize the great joy—it was too much. She dared not accept it yet. And withdrawing herself from his encircling arms, she said:

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"Come, come to father! Can he mean that we shall be happy?"

Kneeling before him, she asked, between tears and smiles:

"Do you mean— Oh, father, speak! Tell me what it is?"

"Gertie's New-year's gift—her father's choice. Have I succeeded in pleasing you, eh, little one?"

"Oh, father! the best, the dearest father that ever a girl possessed! What can we do to make you happy?"

"Why, darling, I am now very happy! It comes very suddenly with my resolve to make others so!" answered Andrew Foster, placing his child's hand in her lover's.

We may give our gifts, of things rich and rare—jewels bright and pure—but the best of all are those of Love, Mercy and Forgiveness. Those should be our "New-year's" gifts.

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FAIRY'S SECRET.

A NEW YEAR'S STORY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Every heart, as God's bright angel,
Can bid some one's sorrow cease;
God has glory when his children
Bring his poor ones joy and peace!"

It was New-Year's eve. A trio of beautiful girls clustered around their father, and told the wish of their h

Playfully covering his ears, he bade them sp
a time."

Ada, the oldest, a beautiful br
up, and whispered, as if

"The ring, pap

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With a beautiful arch look, she asked:

"What will they cost, papa?"

"Not less than a hundred dollars, little one."

"Papa, if you will give me seventy-five to spend myself I would like it better. Will you?"

"No, papa; don't! I believe she is hoarding up all the money you give her. She will not tell us what she did with her birthday money. She never buys ornaments or anything for herself, but is always borrowing mamma's or mine," exclaimed Ada.

A deep flush mantled Fairy's fair brow. She did not reply to the unkind words, only looked eagerly for her father's reply.

"I trust her. Sometime she will surprise us with the things she has purchased."

Their father of the girls, was a man whose [illegible] his own exertions. By [illegible] for many years, he

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New-Year's morn brought to each of the daughters the desired gift.

Directly after breakfast, Fairy was off to spend her money, so she said.

At dinner her father asked:

"Well, Fairy, what did you buy?"

She did not speak. Ada and Fannie said simultaneously:

"She will not tell, papa. She says she will not."

"My daughter will tell me, I know, when you are not in hearing. You tease her too much."

After dinner he drew her with him into the library, and sought to gain her secret.

"Please, papa, don't *make* me tell you! I would rath[er] not," she pleaded.

Disappointed and mortified that he had [not] confidence, he left her.

In the evening he went w[ith] girls preferred to rem[ain]

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"Where did you leave Miss Fairy, Maggie? And are you to return for her, or will she have company home?" he asked, as calmly as he could.

Completely taken by surprise, Maggie gave sure evidence of her complicity with Fairy's actions, whatever they might be. She stammered, hesitated, and attempted to deny any knowledge of her absence. Terribly anxious was George Harden. His manner was so stern and determined that Maggie became frightened, and exclaimed:

"Oh! she will never forgive me, if I tell!"

"Come with me! Show me where you left her! No delay. Come!" And he took Maggie by the arm, and ening the door, stepped out. The girl no longer resisted. ceded him up town to a retired street, and stopped ll, neat-looking house, and sobbed out:

"

en, the inner blinds were e, and George Har-

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ing, hopeful, she must be speaking, for the sad, weary look vanished from the mother's face, and a pleasant smile was in its place.

A mist was in George Harden's eyes. He pressed them tightly together an instant and then began anew his gazing. He was fascinated, spellbound. There was a conflict raging in the man of money's breast. All was explained then about the spending of his gifts. Her sweet, young face was illumined by an expression of such holy joy, that George Harden's heart was conquered, and echoed the cry which escaped his lips, "My blessed child!"

On and on he gazed, wondering for whom she had been providing thus. Soon, however, he was answered by the entrance, from an inner room, of a man whose features were well known to him.

None other than William Eaton, the clerk who had asked for an increase of pay a few days before.

Quickly the care-worn expression vanished, and a pleasant smile came in its place, as the poor clerk's eyes wandered from one to the other of his loved ones, and then rested on the young girl, the good fairy who had made them all so happy.

George Harden strained his ear to catch the low words the grateful man was speaking to his child, but in vain. A moment after, however, he could imagine what they were; for in her sweet, distinct voice Fairy replied, in tones sufficiently loud to reach her father's ear:

"Oh, no; you mistake. Papa will not censure! He does not think. It is his *mind*, not *heart*, that is at fault."

George Harden moved hastily from the window. Motioning Maggie to follow a few yards from the house, he stopped, and said to the wondering girl:

"You will now do just what Miss Fairy told you, Maggie, without mentioning one word with regard to my actions this

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evening. You understand? You can relieve your mind, however, of any apprehensions of my disapproval. If you always do as my daughter wishes, you will do right, and always please me."

An hour after, George Harden sat in his library waiting his Fairy's coming; yes, his good Fairy, who had so unconsciously bestowed on him such a blessed gift that New Year's evening. Something that he had lost for many long years she had helped him to find again—his better nature long, long ago, that had had been crowded out by thoughts of gold and gain. Dear little Fairy! so unselfish, so quiet, so unknown in her blessed acts!

How he longed, then, for her coming! There had been a great dread in the father's heart, and he had been so unjust to his child—ungrateful and disobedient he had thought her.

A few weeks previous to the opening of our story, George Harden felt it his duty to inflict a severe blow to little Fairy's visions of love and happiness. Fairy had a lover, of course, and one her father disapproved, and bade her banish from her heart and home.

Fairy's lover, Willis Mordaunt, was a poor artist, and stood very much in the way of suitors of high position and great wealth. This was his only fault, in George Harden's opinion, but quite sufficient to place an insurmountable barrier between Willis and his lady love.

The mystery attending Fairy's actions had induced her father to fear they were in some way connected with her lover; perhaps an intended elopement. How those few past hours had convinced him of her purity and goodness!

"How I have tried her young heart, and how patiently she has borne it! I will make her as happy to-night as she has made others; aye, and her father too!"

A few moments more, and Fairy was beside him. There

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was an anxious, inquiring look in her soft blue eye, when she found her father awaiting her, and learned he had returned so early in the evening; but the gentle, loving way he welcomed her coming convinced her she had nothing to fear.

"Little Fairy," he said, "your father craves his New-Year's boon. Have you no gift for him who gives so much to you?"

"Oh, papa, what can I give that you have not?" she answered.

"You can give that for which I would give all my worldly goods to have—my daughter's confidence and perfect trust! Will you give me this, my child?"

She looked long, earnestly, eagerly into his eyes.

"I will! I will!" she cried; and was clasped closely to his breast.

"First, my Fairy, your father will begin with this new year by trying to make you happy. What shall be the wish for him to grant? Speak without fear the dearest wish—the one nearest your heart."

Joy danced in her eye; bright smiles wreathed her rosy lips; and kneeling at his feet, she looked eagerly into his face, and whispered:

"Papa, think—can you mean it? May Willis—" She stopped. The glad light faded from her eyes; the sweet face grew thoughtful and sad; and pressing her little hands over her heart, as if to still its wild emotions, she remained a moment in contest with her heart and its pleadings.

"Papa, I had commenced to plead for the happiness of two, but that wish must give place to another which will make many happy. Father, William Eaton and his family are in sore distress. Be more liberal. Increase his pay, and the others in your employment. Do, my father!"

"My darling child! And is the happiness of others so

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dear to you? Can you be happy in theirs? Yes, I know 'tis even so. Look up, little Fairy! Another boon you must claim. For this was determined upon an hour ago." And then he told her all, and blessed the Fairy whose loving nature had won him to the path of true happiness.

And then little Fairy listened gladly to the whispering of her heart, and answered its pleading by her wish for Willis's recall.

Many hearts were gladdened the next day by the unexpected and liberal advance of pay: and when the clerks of George Harden returned to their homes that evening, they united with their loved ones in blessings on the good and just man. In after days his course was marked by continual acts of mercy; and he did not hesitate to say he "was guided by Fairy's influence."

And she, the good Fairy, was as happy as she deserved to be—happy in her father's love and perfect confidence, happy in her lover's devotion, happy in the possession of an approving conscience. Her jewels were of the purest lustre, the rarest worth.

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A JOYOUS THANKSGIVING.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"For the heart grows rich in giving.
All its wealth is living grain;
Seeds that mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain."

"How dreadfully provoking! What shall I do? Of all days, she is the most needed now! Thanksgiving eve and the cook sending word 'she cannot come to-day,' just as though it was a matter of no consequence. I declare, servants are the torments of a woman's life!" said Isabel Allworth, whose tone and features expressed the utmost annoyance.

"Why, my dear, I thought your cook was a prize. I'm sure I've heard you say so. What is the trouble now?" asked Mr. Allworth.

"Yes, at one time I did think so. But lately she has been growing like all the rest. Late in the morning; wanting to 'slip home' during the day; forgetful and neglectful. I should have sent her off ten days ago if I had thought I could do any better. She has always some frivolous excuse. A sick child, mother, or some one; and now, this morning, she has sent me word she 'cannot possibly come.' You can tell her I shall not require her services any longer. I shall provide myself with some one else in her place," concluded Mrs. Allworth, turning to the messenger waiting.

"Perhaps she has some very forcible reason," suggested Mr. Allworth. "What does she say?"

"Somebody living with her being very ill. I'll start,

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directly after breakfast, and try to find another. I have to go down town to make some charitable visits. There are a few poor women I want to make comfortable to-morrow."

"Very likely you will make one very uncomfortable, Isabel. You may be hasty about this matter. Do not worry about the dinner to-morrow. Your chamber-maid and the dining-room servant, I think, can manage the vegetables; the meats, game, and dessert, I will order from a restaurant."

"Yes, well, do; it will relieve me so much. But I am determined to make her feel the loss of such a home and twelve dollars a month," answered Isabel, with a determined expression on her face.

Isabel Allworth was widely known for her charities. Her name always headed the list for any foreign or domestic mission. She could well afford to be liberal. Her husband was a wealthy banker, and never questioned his wife's demands for money, frequent and large as they were.

Mark Allworth was very proud of his beautiful wife, who was twenty years younger than himself. Isabel had married him because he was rich. But she was a faithful wife, and grateful always for the love and gold her husband lavished on her.

Isabel's family were of old and noble blood. You might easily detect that when you gazed on her. Proudly erect her head, with its truly regal brow, the short, curling upper lip, the straight and beautifully chiselled nose, all told of whom she came. A proud race! But they were poor, very poor—Isabel, her younger sister, and the widowed mother. It was a hard struggle for them to keep up an appearance of gentility. How Isabel rebelled against the fate that made it so. With her tastes of elegance and refinement, it was an irksome life. So when Mark Allworth asked her to be his, she gladly accepted his name and the position his

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wealth could give her. Not so Mabel, her sister. Love was life to her. And so she formed the acquaintance, how they knew not, of a young actor, and, to the severe mortification of her family, eloped with him. This happened about the time of Isabel's marriage. The mother never recovered the shock; her health failed, and soon she passed from earth.

Isabel never forgave Mabel. She had seen her but once since her marriage—the day of her mother's funeral—and then Mabel came to her, and with a heart almost crushed with the thought that her conduct had terribly wounded the spirit, if not really ended the life of her mother, she would have thrown her arms around her, and begged for one word of sympathy and love; but the cold bitter look of Isabel told too plainly Mabel had been cast entirely from her sister's heart.

Five years had passed since. She had no knowledge of Mabel, except that she was a widow somewhere in that great city. The death of her husband she had seen announced in the papers.

No children had been given to Isabel, or perhaps her heart would have grown softer. This was a great disappointment to her husband, she well knew, and her own nature craved the blessings denied.

Once, during the month previous to the opening of our story, she had dreamed of sitting alone in her room, surrounded by all her elegance. Her thoughts had wandered back to her childhood and the little sister then so dear. She felt some one pulling her hand. A soft, gentle, tiny pressure and effort it was. She glanced down, and at her side was a beautiful little child, a miniature of herself. Her heart filled with love. The little cherub was her own, she felt. She yearned to clasp it to her bosom, and put forth her arms, when off flew the little one, and in a sweet voice called, "Come, come with me, mamma!" Springing up,

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she followed, through long streets, until they reached a miserable house, and then the child disappeared through the door. She hesitated to follow it, when again the sweet voice called to her. The door opened, and revealed Mabel. The little guide had brought her to her sister, and was then nestling in Mabel's arms. Isabel sprang forward to take it, when closer it clung, saying:

"Open your heart, mamma; make room for both, and then I'll come to you."

She sprang forward, exclaiming:

"My darling, I must have you!" And awoke to find it all a dream. But her heart had yearned so much ever since, for the little child of that dream.

Seated in her elegant carriage, Isabel Allworth directed her coachman to drive to the different places where she intended to dispense her charities. All were at length visited, save an old blind woman.

"Alex, do you know where Mrs. Brown lives?" Isabel asked of the coachman.

"Oh, yes, madam! And most likely there you will be able to find another cook. Mrs. Brown lives in a tenement house; and there are many women there needing employment," answered the man.

Isabel was soon with the blind woman, making her heart glad by the many comforts she had brought.

"Will I be likely to find a good cook here, Mrs. Brown?" she asked.

"I don't know, but will find out for you." She knocked with her cane on the wall of the room, and soon was answered by the appearance of a girl.

"She can tell you," said the blind woman.

Isabel repeated her inquiry, and the girl replied:

"Oh, yes, madam. There is a woman, a nice smart one, who is just out of a place. I know she will want another,

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for she is dreadfully poor, and has to take care of a poor old mother, and a lady, a real lady, who was so ill this morning we all thought her dying, and so Hannah Hines could not leave the lady; and just for that her mistress discharged her. There are some very hard-hearted people in this world, lady," said the girl, with a sorrowful look, as she shook her head.

Isabel's face had flushed quickly when she heard the woman's name, the very one she had discharged that morning.

"You say she is so very poor?" she asked, in a low voice.

"Oh, yes, madam, dreadfully poor. She feels the loss of such a good home very much. And the beautiful lady that's with her cried so much when the boy came back with the lady's message, that 'she did not want Hannah any more.' Poor things! It is bad with us all, but then we are not so miserable as Hannah, two people pulling her back all the time. She tried hard to be cheerful, but I could see how bad she felt this morning. Come, lady, I will show you her room."

Isabel hesitated a moment. Her heart was chiding her for the sorrow she had given the poor woman. Oh, if she had only thought how many trials a poor servant may have! How the tardiness of her coming may have been caused by long, weary, sleepless hours by the bedside of suffering old age or infancy. Oh, why could she not have been more considerate! But she would repair the past by future kindness.

She followed the girl, who, after passing many doors, pointed to one, saying:

"In there you will find her."

Isabel thanked and dismissed the girl, and then stopped for a moment outside the partially opened door. She glanced

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in. There was an old curtain fixed up, to break the wind a little. The place seemed very familiar to Isabel, yet she was sure she had never been there before.

Isabel glanced in again, then, through a little opening in the curtain. More earnestly she gazed. There came a wild look in her eye; she turned deathly pale, and caught the door for support.

"My sister! Oh God! And here in this misery!" she murmured. And then quickly her dream flashed through her mind.

It was all just as she had seen it then; but where was the little child? A guardian angel, perhaps, guiding her heart to mercy, forgiveness, and love.

Propped up in a miserable old chair was Mabel, so worn, so pale and sad-looking, Isabel could scarcely recognize her. Near her, ministering to her, was Hannah Hines. In another part of the room sat an old woman, bowed with age and suffering.

Poor Hannah! well might she have seemed to Isabe both forgetful and negligent, so much she was thinking of those suffering ones at home who needed her so much.

She could not go in there then. Hastily retracing her steps, she entered her carriage, and ordered to be driven quickly home.

"A boon, my husband! a boon for the Thanksgiving!"

"Speak, love! It is already granted," answered Mark Allworth, as Isabel sank to a seat beside him.

And then she told him all—all the bitterness of her spirit for so long; all the injustice she had done the noble, suffering Hannah; and then all the regret that filled her heart. She wanted to atone—to give them great joy for the sorrow she had caused them that day.

"My wife, all I possess is yours. Share it with whom you please."

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"Here? May I have Mabel here?" she asked, eagerly.

"Certainly; and I thank heaven my wife is all right at last. We will have a thanksgiving, from the inmost heart of more than one, in our home to-morrow, darling."

Isabel called her maid, who was a quick, bright girl. Ten minutes conversation with her made her understand perfectly what she was to do. She was then dispatched with a kind note from Isabel, asking Hannah to return with the maid.

Two hours more, and Isabel sat waiting the coming of Hannah. Soon she was with her. There was a bright, joyous light in Isabel's eyes, a sweet, gentle smile on her lips, that Hannah had never seen before. What could have happened to make her look thus? Most frequently before, the look that greeted the cook was fretful.

"Sit down, Hannah," she said so kindly, that the poor woman's wonder increased.

"Hannah, I was hasty this morning; I do not wish you to leave me. Do you not think you might stay all the time with me? I mean, bring your mother too?"

A bright light shone for a moment in Hannah's eye, but soon faded away as she said, "I think not, madam; I have another that needs my care."

"Come, Hannah! See what a comfortable room I can give you! Come!" And Isabel drew the hesitating woman to a room in the back building, opened the door, and pushed her in.

Seated in a comfortable easy-chair in the cosy, warm room, was Hannah's mother, looking very happy, and very much at home.

The old woman chuckled gleefully when her daughter gazed wildly from Isabel to her mother, and placing her hands to her head, murmured:

"Am I dreaming!"

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"No, no; 'tis no dream. Will you stay now, Hannah?"

"I cannot—I cannot desert *her!*" answered the poor woman, scarcely able to realize she was really awake.

"Come, Hannah, some one is calling you!" And again Isabel drew the bewildered woman along with her, and stopped before a front room in the upper story.

"Hannah!" called a feeble voice.

Through the door with a bound she went, and sank beneath the one she would never desert.

With her arms around her sister, Isabel told the still bewildered woman the events of that day, and learned from her that she had been a servant in the family of Mabel's husband, that she was very much attached to him, and after his death still stayed with Mabel, sharing her poverty and attending to her when her health failed so much she could not provide for herself.

She had seen Mrs. Ainworth's advertisement for a cook, and sought the situation so as to obtain money to provide for the invalid and her own mother.

But how had Isabel managed to get them in her own home without her knowledge, Hannah could not understand.

It was easily explained. The maid had been directed to stop at several places returning home—a half a dozen things to attend to—taking at least two hours; thus giving Isabel ample time to drive to Hannah's home, wrap up both invalids in the comfortable shawls she had provided, place them in the carriage, and reach home before the arrival of Hannah.

Oh, that truly was a joyous Thanksgiving! Old age was comforted, hearts so long estranged were again united, and the noble-hearted Hannah was rewarded for all her years of unselfishness and devotion.

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Surrounded with love and every comfort, Mabel grew well and strong.

Isabel had no more troubles about her cook. She truly was a prize, and many more might be so if their minds were relieved about their own cares.

Before the next Thanksgiving Isabel's heart had ceased its yearning. The little child of her dream nestled in her bosom, clasped closely to her heart, then worthy to possess it. Isabel is happy, she has so much to be thankful for. And so have many of us; and we may make our day of Thanksgiving not one of forms and words, but of deeds. If not by the scattering forth of worldly goods, by loving, kind, forgiving words—by finding some hearts to make happy.

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EDNA'S WORTH.

BY FRANCES BENSHAW BADEN.

How could we love her? She had caused us such a bitter disappointment. And how could he ever have loved such a pale, strange-looking little witch?—for witch she surely must have been, I thought, to get my brother so bewildered as to fall in love with, and marry her—he, our only boy; so noble, so handsome, and the idol of his sisters; two of us—one widowed, and the other, myself, who gloried in the title of "old maid." Very few sisters, I believe, are perfectly satisfied when their brother has found some one dearer to him than those who have loved him all his life. But I think we should have been, if our choice had been his. And why could it not have been so? Knowing Louise, our beautiful darling, so tall, fair and queenly, how could his heart have wandered elsewhere? In our hearts and minds we had fixed upon her as our brother's wife. Constantly, in our letters, we kept her goodness and beauty ever before him. She was worthy of him; as gifted as our Wilbur, she could appreciate work with him, we thought. Louise was with us when his letter came, bidding us to welcome his bride. I saw the surprise and disappointed look on her sweet face. Not that she had learned to love him—oh, no! But she felt a deep interest in the brother of her dearest friends, which might, if nurtured, have grown into what we had hoped.

Wilbur wrote:

"I shall bring her to you—my poor, stricken little girl! in deep sorrow. She would be alone in the world now, save for me. We were married beside her dying father's couch.

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Scarcely a wife before she was entirely an orphan, with neither sister nor brother. I have promised her so much love from you that she will not feel the loss of a mother or sisters, while I must fill the place of all the others—father, brother, husband."

We felt certain then, after reading the letter, how it was he came to marry her—not for love, but pity. Yes, we fully decided upon that, which did not make us feel any better about it. In fact, we felt that our brother had been taken in, sacrificed, and so on.

We went about our preparations for their coming; furnished anew his room; made it pretty and cheerful. But our hearts were not in our work as they would have been if another was to share it with him.

The night of their coming we had no company to receive them, thinking she would prefer it so. Only Louise was with us. Handsomer than ever was Wilbur. He sprang from the carriage and came quickly up the steps to where we were standing on the porch, clasped first one and then the other of us to his heart, and then back again to the carriage, lifted out the "wee thing," and bore her in his arms until he placed her beside us, saying:

"There, little bird, go nestle away in the hearts waiting for you until I come back."

He went to attend to removing the baggage. She turned, as if about to run back after him. Then, with a quivering lip, she raised her eyes to us—a shy, frightened look, first at me, then toward sister; then there came a softer light into her wild-looking eyes, and she crept into the arms extended to welcome her. Anna was a mother; her heart was not so hard as mine. A little child, a girl of her own, had taught her to feel for every other mother's child, I think. I clasped her hand and pressed my lips to hers, and tried, for Wilbur's sake, to seem loving and kind; but fear she felt

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the want of heart in my greeting, child though she was—scarce seventeen, he told us. She was wise enough to know which of her husband's sisters would be her friend, when first she saw us. We carried her to the parlor and introduced Louise to her. I saw the child's dark face brighten up when the beautiful girl greeted her in such a tender, loving manner. An instant after she cried, with quivering lips:

"Please call me Edna, not Mrs. Mason; that seems so strange. And my heart yearns so to have some one call me Edna. I have not heard it since he—papa—" Here she stopped, and turned her face away. She was weeping, I knew. Wilbur came back just then, and after greeting Louise, said:

"Come, little bird; sisters will show you somewhere where you can trim your feathers a little."

He called her pet names only. Anna went with them, but returned a few moments after, in time to hear my remark:

"Positively a little fright!"

And to reply:

"No, no: not so bad as that. But no beauty, surely."

"What could have made him marry her but pity?" said I.

"We see her in a most unfavorable light. Her great sorrow will wear upon her good looks sadly. Besides, she is tired by her journey. She has glorious eyes. I can see what it was that won his love; she has the winning manner of a petted child. I hope you will love her," said Louise.

We were still talking of her when they returned to the parlor.

I took a malicious delight in comparing the two, and thinking Wilbur could not fail to note the difference between his wife and the one that might have been; she all beauty

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and grace; the other— Well, well, I've said enough about her looks.

Later in the evening, when Louise had drawn Edna apart from us, to look over a portfolio of Wilbur's first drawings—I have not told you he was an artist, of whose pictures the world was loud in praise—he lowered his voice, and said, looking toward his wife:

"She is not herself now. Naturally she is bright, happy, and very charming. You must help me chase away her sadness, and win back her smiles. You will scarce think that she can be very pretty."

I am sure I could not. After a moment's pause, he said:

"Louise is more beautiful, if possible, than ever."

Ah, I thought he could not help comparing them.

It was not long before she was "more like herself," as Wilbur said. Her grief had been so wild and passionate, that naturally it must soon wear itself out. The color came back to her dark cheeks, an additional brightness to her eyes, and often I could hear her voice caroling snatches of bird-like songs. Yes, she was growing merry enough—his love was so perfect; filling the place of father, brother and husband, as he had said it should.

Anna was growing very fond of her, and declared her very, very pretty. Although I had to admit she was no longer a fright, I would not see her beauty, or try to love her. My devotion to Louise precluded anything of that kind.

She grew to be very popular with Wilbur's friends; the young men declaring her charming, while the old ones were quite foolish, I thought, in their praises of her. Wilbur's particular friend, a young physician of rapidly growing favor, who had long been an admirer of Louise, came often with her to our home.

Before Wilbur's marriage, Doctor Wilton had made but

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little progress in his wooing; but since, Louise had seemed more favorably inclined toward him. He was passionately fond of music, and had a very fine voice. Louise, although a brilliant performer, could not sing at all; but she would play the accompaniment, while Edna's and the Doctor's voices blended so beautifully together. Thus hours were spent—every one, I thought, that he could possibly spare from his practice. Wilbur enjoyed their music so much, seeming never to tire of it.

I was very wicked, I know. I really believed her artful and designing. The child-like, artless manner I thought assumed. I saw how happy she was, those hours spent in the Doctor's society; and it made me dislike her the more for finding pleasure anywhere but with her husband. I coaxed myself into believing she was trying to bewitch Louise's lover, as she had Wilbur. Many times I've heard her say:

"I wish Louise and the Doctor would come. I miss them so much. Isn't he a splendid man, Wilbur?"

I do not think a doubt of her ever entered his mind until I put it there. I began with a look, or a little word opportunely dropped. Once I remember the expression of pain that came over his features when I said:

"Dr. Wilton admires Edna very much. How well their voices are suited! I think, Wilbur, if he had known her before her marriage, you would have had a very formidable rival."

Another time I ventured a little too far. He was in his studio, busy painting. I heard her singing, and thinking it a good chance, I went in. After admiring his work a few moments, I said:

"Has Edna not a wonderfully powerful voice for such a little body?"

He stopped, listened a little while, and said:

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"That is a beautiful piece she is singing now."

"Yes," I replied, "it is her favorite, or rather the Doctor's, which is about the same."

He looked at me sternly a moment, and then said:

"You have never loved Edna, Julia. But be careful that you are not trying to plant thorns that may prick you more severely than any one else."

Aye, his words were prophetic. How deeply I repented my wickedness, no one but He who knoweth every heart can ever imagine. Yet, at that time, I hated her the more for being the cause of the first rebuke that ever came to me from my brother's lips; notwithstanding which I continued my course, more cautiously though. In Louise's ear I put a word—not often, but very effective—until I managed to build up a wall of ice between her and my brother's wife.

Wilbur's heart was troubled. Edna felt it, and was hurt that he did not tell her why. She grew reserved, crushing back the loving impulses of her nature. The Doctor's visits ceased with Louise's, and Wilbur feared Edna was sorrowing that he came not.

Wilbur worked night as well as day then—worked to keep from thinking. He was looking miserably. At length Edna declared him really ill, and begged him to cease his work. Her anxiety chased away the reserve she had tried to maintain, and she insisted that he should consult a physician. He would not. She begged then that she might send for his friend Doctor Wilton, and he should talk with him. When she said that, I looked at Wilbur—a look which spoke volumes. She wanted an excuse to have him again near her, I thought and my eyes told that and more. There came an expression in Wilbur's eyes then I could not read. I knew not if it was defiance toward me, or resignation to her wish or will. And he said:

"Yes; send for Wilton, if it will relieve your mind."

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The Doctor came. They had a long talk. Edna was not present, nor either of us. When he came out of the studio, she met him in the hall In reply to her inquiries, I heard him say:

"He *must* stop work and rest. He complains of a pricking sensation in his right side and shoulder. I do not like that. It is unfavorable. Still, with rest and care, I think we can bring him round all right."

But he would work on. We were not rich, he said; it was necessary for him to work.

For many weeks, indeed since the reserve in their manner to each other, Edna would spend the hours that were formerly passed in Wilbur's studio, locked in her own room—doing what, I knew not, but believed her sulking.

At length the terrible blow came. With horror I felt how much I had helped to cause it; perhaps was the very instrument that dealt it. Had I not made him unhappy would he have toiled so hard—striving to banish thought?

She found him lying, apparently lifeless, beside his work. For weeks he lingered, hovering, as it were, between us and eternity.

She rested not, nor would leave him for an hour. If she slept, it was a moment, now and then, with her head on his pillow, where his slightest movement would arouse her. At last the Doctor told us he would live, but never more to work. His right arm was paralyzed.

I had been growing somewhat less bitter in my feelings toward her during his illness. She had seemed so devoted, so anxious. But when Doctor Wilton said, "but never more to work," a look of unmistakable pleasure was in her eyes. Not a grateful expression, but one more of exultation, power. What could it mean? Had those long weary hours of anxious watching been only fine acting? The old doubts and suspicions came back again, growing daily greater

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and darker. She would meet the Doctor often at the door, and stand for many minutes in earnest, whispered conversation. Once out on the porch, hidden behind the clustering vines, I saw her place her hand on his arm, and looking up into his eyes—her own filled with tears—she said:

"How much longer? Oh, these last two weeks have been more than years to me. And if—oh, if—you have not been deceiving me I may hope—"

"Everything," he answered, interrupting her. And taking her hand in his, he continued: "You will not have many more days to wait, and then I am sure we shall be very happy." And shaking the hand he held, he hurried off.

Now I dare not think back to the terrible thoughts which filled my mind. Wilbur was still very weak. I must not, even by a look, warn him of what I feared. He was very tender and loving to her. But the old doubt still lingered in his heart, and an expression of the deepest sadness came over his face. When one day she heard the well-known step in the hall, and darted out to meet the Doctor, I heard Wilbur murmur, unconscious of my presence:

"Poor child! She is so young. I hoped to make her happy; but I am so grave and quiet, and nearly twice her age. God give me strength to bear it."

I told my thoughts to Anna. She would scarce listen. She would not think her so false. "She was a thoughtless child, and nothing more," she said.

Wilbur seemed so very slow in getting better. Ah, I knew why he cared not to live.

Edna was in a state of feverish excitement, which every hour grew worse. One day I felt the crisis was near. Her cheeks were burning; her eyes glowing with a wilder look than ever; while I knew her ear was strained to catch every sound of coming footsteps. At last she heard the welcome

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sound, and sprang down the steps to meet him. I heard him exclaim, "Joy at last!" and she, "Bless you! O, God will bless you for your goodness to me!" A little talk that I could not hear, and then he walked into the parlor, and she came bounding up stairs again into her husband's room. If she saw me she did not care, she was so wild with delight Wilbur was sitting in an arm-chair. She threw herself on a stool at his feet, caught his hand, pressing it close to her bosom, and joyfully cried out:

"At last, at last I can tell you. You will doubt us no longer. And forgive me for having a secret from you. I dared not tell, I was so fearful of a failure. See! see! There is no longer need of your working. I shall work for you—for us all. And oh, what a labor of love it will be! See! see!"

And she held before him a paper, pointing with her tiny finger to something on it. He looked at it, then at her, as if he had just awakened from a strange, wild dream. Before he could speak, she drew from her pocket a roll of notes, and thrust them into his hand, saying:

"This is yours, all yours. I am all yours, am I not? And I will have more, much more. Oh, speak to me, Wilbur. Say one little word, please."

"Oh, the unutterable joy that beamed on his wan face then, as he murmured, clasping her to his heart:

"Thank God! You are *all* my own!"

I stole away then—hid myself from their sight. In the next room to the parlor I was when she came down, a little while after, and said to the Doctor:

"Come to him; he knows all. I've told him how much we owe you, our best friend. Come, come! he wants you."

How terribly I had wronged her! Could she ever forgive me? I thought. Yes, she did fully, freely; but can I ever forgive myself?

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Soon we knew all. How those hours, locked in her own room, she had been working for us; writing her pure, beautiful thoughts. To the Doctor she had told her secret, begging his advice and assistance. He had placed her work before those he believed would appreciate and accept it, guarding her secret so closely, for fear of a failure, that it brought trouble between Louise and himself. But all was over then. Louise came, and with her arms around her, pleaded for forgiveness.

Wilbur is resigned to His will; and although he paints no more beautiful pictures on canvas, his themes are given to Edna—those that she, in her charming manner, weaves into romances which are winning for her the brightest laurels, and for us already have gained a happy, luxurious home. How much she gives us! The best of all her gifts is her great love.

She knows how deep and true is my repentance, and is, I think, kinder to me than my sister, if possible. She has given us some one else to love now—a little Wilbur. My life is devoted to him. I love him better than even his father, with a love devoid of selfishness—one purified by experience, suffering and remorse.

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THE MAGIC CRUSE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

For the heart grows rich in giving.
And its wealth is living grain;
Seeds which moldew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy?
Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden;
God will bear both it and thee.
—Golden Grain.

"Please, sir, will you buy some of these pretty things? Watch-cases, pen-wipers, slippers, and pin-cushions? *Do*, sir, please. They are very cheap, and my mother is ill and works so hard," said a little girl, in a pleading, sorrowful voice, to the proprietor of an extensive "gentlemen's furnishing" establishment on Chestnut street, Philadelphia.

"No, I have no need of anything of the kind. Pass on, young one," answered Mr. Pinchem, in a harsh, rough voice.

The little one started toward the door, hesitated, and then went slowly into the street and on her way.

This little waif on the sea of hard, dark waters might be about nine or ten years of age, judging from her size; but the poor little pinched face, with the large sad eyes, had the look of years of sorrow.

She was dressed scrupulously clean, but "in very antique garments." She was proceeding slowly along the sidewalk, gazing in the different stores to see a face which invited her in, but, oh, such are very hard to find in the world of trade.

The child was talking to herself, when a hand was laid on her shoulder, and a pleasant, kind voice said:

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"Stop, little girl, and talk to me, or let me talk to you. I am the runner-boy in the store you were in just now. I felt so sorry for you and your sick mother. I am poor myself, but I ran after you to say I have made an extra dollar to-day, and I'll take what you will give me for it, and may be I could sell some for you. I am often at the houses of the rich with bundles, and I will try to help you, if you say so."

"Oh, thank you, kind, good boy. Give me the dollar; that will help us to-day; and take my basket and try to help us more. Keep what you choose for yourself; I am so tired and disappointed, I do not want to try to sell any more."

"Tell me, little girl, what were you saying when I came up and spoke to you?"

"I was only repeating what I have often heard grandpa say, 'There is no friendship in trade;' and I was wondering if that did not mean, there is no trade friendly to poor folks. I think it must mean that," answered the strange child.

"Now tell me your name, please? Mine is Jacob Truman."

"And mine is Avis Wirth. That means a birdie, grandpa says; but they all call me Avie. I will tell you where we live, and if you can sell those things, you can find time perhaps to come to our house;" and she gave him the street and number, and then added:

"I will ask God to bless the good boy, when I say my prayers to-night. Good-bye; don't forget to try and help us."

Jacob did try, and in two or three days disposed of the contents of the basket, and instead of the dinner hour being spent at home, he told his mother he should be busy that day; and so he went and hunted up his little friend,

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made his returns, and received a new supply, with numberless blessings from the invalid mother and poor crippled grandfather.

Things went on so for several weeks, when one day Jacob went to see after his little protegee, and found that the mother's weary eyes and tired fingers were resting at last Little Avie had, soon after Jacob's first visit, enlightened him with regard to the family affairs. Her father had gone to Australia gold hunting, and they had heard nothing of him for two years; but some of the men who went out with him had sent word home that he died of the fever on the hospital ship.

When Jacob found Avie sobbing over her mother's cold form, he was sorely troubled. What could he say or do to help her? Amid her sobs she would tell him, that the ladies were going to get her grandpa in the alms-house, and put her in the asylum.

"Oh, Jacob," she pleaded, "do not let them take me from grandpa; I shall die. Please, good Jacob, try to help me in this trouble."

"What did your mother say, Birdie? Did she express no wish about your future welfare?" asked Jacob.

"No. Oh, yes, she did say, 'I leave my poor little bird to God's care. He will provide.' Oh, Jacob, if God would only let *you*, instead of the ladies, take care of me; and sending me away from grandpa too!" sobbed the child.

"I am going now, my poor little dear, and I will try my best to return with some good news for you. I will be back this afternoon."

Jacob first returned to his employer, asked for leave that afternoon, saying he would be back in time to close up the store and take any packages, if necessary.

This gained, he went home, and with a faint heart he told his mother about his holiday to attend the funeral of a

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friend; and then he told, in a touching manner, the story of the poor child; how he first knew her; about the sick mother, and the old grandfather.

Mrs. Truman listened with interest, for she was very proud of her good boy. "He was not like the generality of boys," she would often say to her neighbors.

"You are just like your father was, Jacob—too kind for your own good. Serving friends was his ruin, and brought us where we now are," said Mrs. Truman.

"But, mother dear, *that* virtue helped to carry him where he now is—in heaven, with our little Rosie. Now listen, mother. You know I never go to places of amusement and spend my money like the other boys—not even my extras. I bring *all* to you. Mother, grant me one favor. Go with me to the funeral, and—and bring Avie and her grandfather. We have a spare room, and—"

"Jacob Truman, are you crazy? How on earth could I feed them? Boy, you are wild! Oh, dear, just like his father. Don't say another word, boy!"

"But, mother, I must. I will feed them; and besides, Avie's services will be a full compensation to you for any trouble you may have. Mother, dear, remember the words, 'Be merciful according to thy power.' Think, mother, if your little daughter could speak from heaven, would she not plead for this little one?" Jacob continued his pleading, growing more earnest and eloquent even. At last his end was gained, and mother and son proceeded to the house of sorrow, went to the graveyard, and then returned to be present at the consultation respecting the future of the bereaved ones.

The guardians for the poor had pretty well made up their minds what to do. Avie was seated with her head on her grandfather's knee, sobbing piteously.

Mrs. Truman, thinking it was now the proper time to

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speak, came forward, kindly lifted the orphan child, and laying her hand gently on the old man's shoulder, turned and said:

"Friends, you need not give yourselves any further trouble about this matter. I tell you plainly, this child shall not be taken from her grandfather, nor he from her. They shall both live with me, provided it is agreeable to them, and I shall try and make them as comfortable as where you would put them. At any rate, they will not be grieved by a separation. Jacob, speak to your friends, and tell them who I am."

Jacob was only sixteen, but of a manly look and bearing far beyond his years. He went forward, spoke in a low voice to the old man and child. The former grasped his hand warmly, and blessed him.

Mrs. Truman was introduced; and when grandfather Goodman had gazed earnestly in her face for sometime, he said:

"Stern, but just; a little hard, but a true and earnest face. Come, Birdie, thank the lady. We will go with her."

In a short time they were comfortably fixed in Jacob's home.

Things went on very prosperously for several months. Jacob's pay was increased. Avie made herself very useful; and thus far mother Truman had no cause to regret her good action.

But a long hard winter came on. Jacob fell on the ice, and broke his leg. For months he lay quite helpless. The little earnings were dwindling fast away. Mrs. Truman was very despondent, and did not conceal her feelings from her son. It was bad enough for her to have to look out for her own, without the care of others on her mind. "The end would be they would have all to go to the poor-house together!" she said.

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Jacob tried hard to instill into her mind faith in God s love and care:

"Remember, mother, 'he that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord.' Things will be brighter soon."

"Jacob, it grieves my heart to have to say it, but the old man will have to go to the alms-house, and Avie will have to hunt a service place. Things are now as bad as can be—cupboard empty, wood-house clear of even chips and cinders. Better to send them off, than to have them starve and freeze before us."

"No, mother. Wait a little longer. God will provide."

Avie saw and felt this trouble. She watched mother Truman's every expression.

"Grandpa! oh, grandpa, what will we do? No wood or coal—the last is burning now. I can get a little bit of money to buy tea and bread with my knitting-work, but oh, I am so afraid you and Jacob will suffer from the cold!" said Avie, sorrowfully.

"Never fear, Birdie, all will be well. A little suffering will not hurt us, but make us appreciate God's mercy the more. Too much prosperity hardens the heart, and we forget to be grateful. But here, take this." And the old man drew forth a massive gold watch, only valuable for the case and the reminder of better days. "Go pawn it; perhaps we may get it back some day. I know and feel sure this is only a trial for us. Better days are coming. We shall have a plenty and to spare some day. Yes; and I will live to see it."

The little feet flew along the long streets. The desired place was found; and in the shop wonderful to Avie, a kind face.

The gentlewoman, the proprietor's wife, had in her girlhood known a hard, sad life. She knew sorrow, and felt for the needy.

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The child's beautiful sad face made its impression, and the woman took the watch, gave the ticket, and with it twenty dollars, saying:

"I think that is the most it is worth. I'll keep it for you as long as I live; so you can get it back any time, should you wish."

She bought Avie's knitting, and paid liberally, telling her to bring all she wanted to sell to her, and come to see her often.

With a light heart Avie returned with the welcome news to her grandfather.

Mrs. Truman thought she must be dreaming, or had lost her senses, when Avie came to her, put the roll of notes in her hand, and said:

"Grandpa sent you this to get some wood and coal, and do as you choose with."

"Where did you get it? Twenty dollars! Jacob, make her tell you. I am frightened about it."

"Come here, Birdie! How did grandfather get so much money?" said Jacob, gravely.

"I don't want to tell you; you might feel bad about it," said the child pleadingly.

"Mother feels very anxious. Will you not tell me, Avie? Will you not do as Jacob wishes you?" he asked in a sad voice.

"Yes, oh, yes, if you tell me I must. I will always, so long as I live, do as you wish me in everything. I sold grandpa's watch," answered Avie.

How those grateful, loving words sank into the heart of the youth, and were often recalled with pleasure. Yes, and in years after bade him have faith in her and hope.

Tears were in the eyes of mother and son. Mrs. Truman felt deeply her want of faith, and keenly too, that God had sent her the needfu. through the hand of those whom, only a few short hours before, she had felt such a burden.

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She was very tender to Avie and the old man for many days, until darkness crept over her life again. Still Jacob felt hopeful. He would not despair. The money was all spent, and hunger and cold were again staring at them.

They were too proud to ask for help. A bright idea struck Avie. She went to her friend at the pawnbroker's, told her story, and was followed home by a boy with a large basket of good things for the invalids; and more than this, the kind woman told her to go to Jacob's Sabbath-school teacher, and let him know the state of things.

Avie went. The kind man had no idea they really were in need. He had visited Jacob often, and carried him delicacies, and then found things always seemingly right. That day Mr. Brightwell made another visit, and talked plainly to Jacob; told him he had money to spare, and would like to loan him as much as was necessary for their use; and he had sufficient confidence in Jacob to say, "Return the amount when you are well again, and can very well spare it."

Jacob and his mother poured forth their thanks, but Mr. Brightwell said:

"Stop, stop, my friends! You must thank this little one for giving me the pleasure of assisting you." And he placed his hand on Avie's bright hair.

"Mother, Birdie must go to school. I have taught her all I know, but she must have more than this. She is far too intelligent and capable to be neglected. We must have her educated as far as our public-school can do it, and that is quite sufficient for her position in life."

"Jacob, impossible! She would need more clothes. And now we must be saving to pay back Mr. Brightwell's money and she must be doing her embroidery and knitting to help. She can read and write, and that is enough for any common child."

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"Mother, it is not enough, and she is not a common child I have spoken to Mr. Brightwell, and he is in no hurry. He thinks Avie should be thoroughly educated. She can be a teacher then in our schools, and help you in your old age."

Jacob conquered. Avie's progress in her studies was wonderful, far beyond even Jacob's expectations. The day of reward came, and the joyous child returned home, placed the proofs of her industry and merit before Jacob, and said:

"Are you pleased, Jacob?"

"Very much, my good little student."

"Jacob, you will spoil that child, and make her as vain as can be!" said Mrs. Truman, sharply.

"Oh, no! Please do not think that of me. I only care to please Jacob, and prove to you that I am not wasting my time."

During the next year Mrs. Truman had good cause to bless the little orphan girl. A heavy cold, taken in the fall and neglected, terminated in a severe attack of pneumonia, and for many days her life was despaired of.

Avie nursed her benefactor with the devotion of a grateful heart. When slowly recovering strength, Mrs. Truman became fully conscious of what a little comforter was near her.

Years passed on. Grandfather Goodman still lived, and continued to talk of the "better days coming." Avie was fifteen. Mrs. Truman no longer objected to her going to school. She was first in all her studies, and the next year was promised the position of assistant teacher.

Jacob had long since left Mr. Pinchem, and was bookkeeper for Mr. Brightwell; but his heart was not in his work. He longed for knowledge, and every moment of leisure was devoted to study.

This little family were again prospering. With the severest economy they had paid all old debts. Mrs. Truman often said she was "just getting a peep at day again, it had been dark so long."

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Friends expressed their thoughts freely respecting Jacob's position, saying "it was a shame that a man should have such a pullback; he would never be able to get ahead in life, with such a heavy weight on his young shoulders. But Jacob thought differently. He considered himself quite prosperous, and was contented in making others around him happy.

One day there came to the house a poor lame man—and oh! such a joyous meeting! 'Twas Avie's father returned.

It was a sorrowful sight, however, to see the dreadful disappointment depicted in the grandfather's face. The visions of brighter days had faded. The old man had felt quite sure that his son-in-law would return some day to repay their benefactors, and place his darling little girl in a position worthy of her beauty and talents. There was a hard struggle to submit cheerfully to "the inscrutable will;" but he conquered, and soon became again quite hopeful of yet seeing a brighter sky beyond the present dark clouds.

Jacob again opened his arms and door to the needy; yes, cheerfully bidding him welcome. Avie's father should never want for home or friend while he lived. Mrs. Truman tried her best to hide her misgivings and forebodings of the final winding-up of her family. The "poor-house" was her continual reference and place of destination—in imagination.

The lame man was much away from home—"probably trying to pick up a little work," thought Jacob. And he suggested to him not to tire or worry himself. This poor boy's faith was destined to a severe trial. Now Mr. Brightwell told him that after that month he should not need his services any longer, but would endeavor to help him in any way he could; that he meditated a change in his business.

Trouble comes not singly. The landlord gave them notice to find another house—he had sold that property. The stranger watched closely the faces of mother and son.

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Surely they must show by some expression they felt the burden heavily—two helpless men to care for.

Jacob said, "We will all suffer together, friends, if so it must be, but I will try and weather the storm."

Jacob's last day of employment was at hand. On the morrow he would be without the means of providing for the future. Still he said hopefully, "I have still some little money left, and before that is gone will find something to do. Cheer up, mother, dear."

"Mrs. Truman, will you go to-day to look at a house I think may suit you? The rent will not be much. It belongs to a friend of mine, and he will not be hard on us," said Mr. Wirth.

"Jacob had better go, he knows best; but I will go too."

They started, leaving Avie to stay with her grandpa. On walked the friends down to the most fashionable part of the city, Mr. Wirth saying he would have to call at his friend's and get the key. They stopped before an elegant house, and he rang the bell. A servant came to the door and said:

"The gentleman was not in, but would be very soon, to his dinner. Please walk in."

They were all quite tired, and glad to get out of the heat, and so accepted the kind invitation to be seated in the cool, elegant reception room.

Jacob and his mother were deeply interested, examining the beautiful paintings, when a pleasant voice fell on their ears, saying:

"You wish the key of the house, I believe?"

Jacob turned to find Mr. Wirth, but he was gone; but in man standing before them they beheld one strangely familiar. The merry, twinkling eye bewildered Jacob.

"Sir—Mr. Wirth, can this be *you?*" said Jacob, in a voice of the greatest surprise.

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"Supposed to be. Cured of lameness, shorn of whiskers, and minus spectacles. Yes, my friends, my benefactors, it is John Wirth, now able to make some little return for all your long kindness. Welcome to your home, if you will receive it as such; and Mrs. Truman, here is the key and deed for the house you have occupied so long. I gave you the notice to leave through the former owner. Now you have a choice. Remain here as my daughter's friend and adviser, or return to your own house. The first we are very anxious to have you do; and I think it will be very lonesome for you there, for I intend to send this young man away from you very soon. Here, my boy, look over these documents."

Jacob could scarcely believe himself awake—he must be dreaming. Before him, in his hand, was a letter from the President of the —— College, saying "they would be prepared and happy to receive Mr. Jacob Truman under their charge," and a receipt for a year's tuition; also a draft for two thousand dollars.

Jacob turned to pour forth his thanks.

"Not a word. You are my boy for the present. Go to your college. Remain as long as you like. Gain all the knowledge you can, and then come and tell me your plans for the future, and you will find that John Wirth can prove his gratitude. Oh, boy, this is the happiest hour of my life. I heard of you while in Australia—of the noble boy in years, but brave in worth and strength of purpose, who divided his little with the orphan and aged. Friends from this city let me know all this, or I should not have rested so easy this long time, away from my child. I felt she was in good hands. How I have worked for this hour!" said John Wirth, in heartfelt tones.

In a few moments more Grandfather Goodman and Avie joined the happy circle. This was a perfect surprise to all, for John Wirth had kept his own counsel.

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Mrs. Truman remained with Avie. Jacob went to his college, and soon proved his great abilities. In three years he received the position of Assistant Professor of Chemistry, to which study he had devoted his principal attention, and now stands before the world celebrated in that science. Avie mastered the various accomplishments, and was quite a belle, not only for her beauty and wealth, but loving disposition. Jacob's remembrance of her childish words gave him courage to ask her if she would repeat them once more, and with them give the promise to be "all the world to him."

Grandfather Goodman lived long years after blessing the union of his darling with "one of the best men living."

Little birds gathered in the home nest, and with bright eyes and merry cooing voices brightened and cheered the old man's life. And then soft loving hands smoothed the aged brow into the last sleep, so beautiful to the faithful.

Mrs. Truman is in her glory; doing good without the constant fear of the poor-house before her eyes; and is often heard to say that "it was Jacob's charity, and unwavering faith through all the greatest adversities, she felt sure, that won for them God's bountiful blessings!"

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JUDGED TOO SOON.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"MONSTROUS depravity! Shameful! Now is not that a sight to discourage any Christian, particularly one that has labored so hard as I have in the temperance cause?" said the worthy Silas Flint; and pointing with his cane, he directed his friend's attention to the opposite side of the street, there to see a boy of about fourteen years, miserably clad, proceeding with very irregular steps, sometimes nearing the curbstone, and then going quite up to the store windows, stopping quite still, and leaning against the buildings, as if for support.

"Is he intoxicated?" inquired Mr. Flint's friend.

"Why, certainly! Do you not see he has a bottle now, peeping from under his jacket? The young vagabond! The work-house is the place for him!"

"He does not look as if he had been drinking rum. He is very pale, and indeed looks quite sick. "Perhaps, now, he is, and we are judging him wrongly. Let us go speak to him, Flint. We can then find out. We may possibly be able to reform him."

"No, we are not judging him wrongly. That bottle is proof positive. It is no use to waste our time talking to him. Besides, it is near five o'clock, and I have to meet the Committee on Foreign Missions. If I had the time, I would find a policeman, and call his attention to that young rascal!"

The friends crossed the street just then, and came very

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close to the boy, who was gazing wistfully into a bakery window. He was very pale, with great mournful gray eyes, around which were dark circles. His thin lips were quite blue, and indeed his whole expression was of great suffering. Silas Flint looked at him with a prejudiced eye and mind. He could see nothing but the bottle. His friend, however, was very doubtful as to the intoxication of the boy; and seeing how wistfully he was gazing in at the bread, cakes and so on, said:

"I do not believe it. He is sick, perhaps. I am going to take him in, and give him something, at any rate."

Just then the boy started off a few steps, reeled, and almost fell; but tightly he clutched his bottle. Several men came along just then, and one exclaimed:

"A young hopeful! Ain't he?"

The charitable feeling in the breast of Mr. Flint's friend, received a check then. He could no longer doubt it was as Mr. Flint said. And that worthy gentleman went on his way, met the "foreign mission workers," subscribed one hundred dollars for that cause, and returned to his home feeling very comfortable, as he considered he had done a Christian duty.

Mr. Flint was a good man in his way. If he saw any suffering he would relieve it, if he could; but he had little faith in anybody or anything. Well, perhaps we should be like him, if we had had his experience. Mr. Flint was a bachelor of forty-five. Twenty years before, he had loved and was engaged to a young girl who supported herself and aged mother by embroidering. The pay was not a living one. Late and early she toiled, until her young life was wearing fast away. Silas was poor then, working as a journeyman. His pay might have kept himself and wife, but the mother would be an encumbrance, an extra mouth to feed; so he dared not marry then. He could not trust to

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Providence for help. But he did trust in Mary. He had perfect faith in her love and constancy.

In the mean time, while Silas was waiting for the old mother to die, or his better days to come, somebody else came to see pretty Mary—one who had money enough to bring the invalid mother wines and delicacies—and so won her heart that she began with whinings and pleadings, and continued for many weeks wondering why Mary would not love and marry the kind young man.

Mary felt her strength growing daily less; and the dreadful thought came, What if she should grow sick? Who would care for her mother; and so the poor girl yielded. And one day when Silas called to tell her of some better luck he had at length, he found his Mary gone—"married," the neighbors told him.

Since then Silas had believed in and trusted no one. In the years that had intervened he had grown in riches, and become quite a leading man in church and State affairs.

A week after the scene we have just related, Silas Flint sat at his abundantly furnished table. A ring at the bell, and the remark from Mrs. Hart, the widowed sister who did the honors of her bachelor brother's establishment:

"John, I think it is a beggar. I saw a boy pass the window. If so, tell the cook to give him his dinner."

Mr. Flint was just leaving the table, and said:

"Stay! I'll go myself."

Opening the door, he found standing on the step the boy he had seen a few days before.

"Please, sir—"

The child's petition was cut short by Silas exclaiming:

"Be off with you! I know you, sir!"

"Oh, sir! My mother—"

"Oh, yes, of course! The same old song, your *mother!* Your *rum!* Why, I vow you've got it now! Be off! I'll

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have you put where you can't get at rum!" exclaimed Silas, his breast filled, as he thought, with righteous indignation.

"Oh, sir, indeed, indeed—"

Slam went the hall door, and the boy tottered off. A few moments after a bright, pretty girl came into the dining-room, and throwing down her music books, said:

"Was there a beggar boy at the door, a moment or two ago?"

"Yes. Why, Katy?" answered her mother.

"Why, he was so miserable looking, and the tears were trickling down his poor pale cheeks. I felt so sorry for him, and gave him all the money I had—only twenty-five cents."

"Yes, and he will go to the first drinking shop and fill his bottle. And your money will do more harm than good," said Uncle Silas.

"Well, perhaps so: but I don't think it, uncle. And if he does, I cannot help it. Better so, than for him to be hungry for bread, and I to refuse him," answered Katy.

A few weeks after this, when Silas Flint was absent from the city, a lady in the neighborhood called on a charitable errand, soliciting Mrs. Hart's and Katy's help in the way of clothes and sewing for the Orphan Asylum. As she was leaving, she remarked:

"By the way, Mrs. Right called on me this morning to obtain help for a case of great destitution in this neighborhood."

"Who?—where? Did you find them very miserable when you went?" Katy asked, very much interested.

"I—did not go—"

"Well, you sent. Tell me all about them. Mamma, we must go."

"No; I did not send. I asked Mrs. Right, if the person was a member of any church. If she had been of ours, of

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course I should have gone immediately. Mrs. Right did not know."

"Nor *care*, if she is like *me*. Good Heavens! Do you suppose, when our blessed Saviour bade his disciples to 'visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction,' to have 'pity on the poor,' He meant those of any *particular* denomination? Save me from such Christians! Well, I suppose, as I am claimed as 'ours' by none, I can with safety assist any and all. I only wish I had the means."

The lady was going off feeling quite insulted by Katy's rather brusque remark, but Katy called her back, making some little apology, and obtained the information she wanted relative to the suffering people.

An hour after, Mrs. Hart and Katy found them. The mother sat by the bed and gently was rubbing the hands of her boy, "the widow's son." Katy immediately recognised the poor boy that her uncle had driven from the door. Paler, thinner far than when she saw him last, he lay. As she drew near, he opened his eyes. A smile of recognition, a sweet, grateful smile, greeted her, and he murmured:

"The kind lady, mother."

Katy's eyes were dim with tears. Seeing by a quick glance the many things she could bring to make the sick boy more comfortable, she hastened home to get them. Everything was done then to help and comfort the mother and her boy. But it was too late. Poor Willie was dying. The physician whom Katy had summoned gave no hope; only a few days at most would he linger.

Silas Flint returned that night, and Katy told him of the dying boy, and the great destitution of the mother.

Early the next morning Katy started her uncle with her. All was still, not even the painful breathing of poor Willie was heard, as they stood at the partly opened door.

"Hush!" whispered Katy. "He is sleeping, I think

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Hushed poor Willie had been—yes, to sleep in the bosom of his Saviour. No more suffering then. All was rest and peace.

Katy stepped into the room. With a quick, noiseless tread, she approached the bed. She knew then that Willie was lovingly cared for. He needed no longer the tardy assistance which was offered then.

Silas Flint drew near, awed! Oh, if that was all! Conscience-stricken, he gazed on the little emaciated form. Oh! if he could only have recalled that harsh, hasty, aye, cruel treatment! What if the boy was as he supposed? He might have saved him.

The look of suffering has passed away. An expression of perfect peace rested on his face. About the lips a smile still lingered, and Silas Flint thought how like was that mouth to one he had loved so well, long years before.

A sob in a distant part of the room caused both Katy and her uncle to turn, and see the poor mother, standing in an attitude of the deepest grief, gazing on a suit of well-worn and patched clothes, which hung over a chair. She turned, in answer to Katy's kind, sympathizing words, and Silas Flint beheld the *Mary* he had loved so long ago!

He sprang forward, caught her hand, and said:

"Mary! So near me, and suffering! Oh! why did I not find you before? Why did you not send to me?"

"I could not! How could I?"

Then Silas thought of the child's coming unbidden, and the result. A groan of anguish escaped his lips.

"My poor darling! He never thought of this when he came home that last day, he was suffering so much;" and drawing out the cork, she went to the fire-place and shook out into the ashes the contents, curds of sour milk and whey.

Silas Flint stood aghast!—Proof positive to him then,

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that he had misjudged the poor boy, cruelly treated him, and was in truth instrumental to his death! At that moment he would have given all his possessions to have recalled his conduct.

Gradually he drew from Mary the story of her sufferings. Her husband had always treated her kindly, giving her every comfort, but spending his money recklessly. How he made it, she knew not for a long time. At length it came to her, the dreadful truth: she was living on the gold won at the gaming table! One after another of her children had died, until only Willie, the youngest, was left, the poor afflicted one. He was subject to convulsions, which had affected him so fearfully he could scarcely walk. "He could only totter about!" Mary said, and Silas groaned again with bitter memories.

Her husband had died five years before, leaving her, of course, destitute. For sometime, until the last few months, she had managed to keep from hunger, at least. But lately her health had failed. She could work no more. One kind friend she told of, who gave Willie a bottle of milk every day.

"The last time he was out, this lady, your niece, met him and gave him some money, which kept us from hunger that day and the next. But Willie, poor darling! did not care to eat much after that day. He fell and injured himself coming home. From that he died."

Dear Willie! patient, suffering Willie! so harshly judged and cruelly treated, sleep on your sleep of perfect peace! Silas Flint's heart will never cease its aching on your account.

What was the great surprise of the neighborhood may be well imagined, when poor Willie's little form was carried to the home of Silas Flint, to be borne from there to a beautiful cemetery, and placed in Mr. Flint's own lot.

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When they returned from the funeral, Silas brought the clergyman with him, and seeking Mary, he said:

"It is a sad fate, Mary, to ask you to come to me. But I cannot let you grieve alone. I must try to comfort you. Come! I have never offered to another woman your place. Will you take it now?"

He put out his hand, hers was clasped, and standing before the man of God, their lives were united.

Silas was a changed man after that. He hunted out the suffering ones near home. The most manifest depravity was dealt gently with. He was ever, from that awaking day, seeking to atone for his past terrible error by future acts of true charity.

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WHAT THE FUTURE BROUGHT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Be true, great sir! and let who will be famous
Do noble things, not spout them all day long;
So shall life, death, and the long hereafter,
Be one high, sweet song."

Sara stood straining her eyes to catch a last glimpse of him, as he moved slowly down the path, without once turning for one more look on either the girl or the old, once-loved scenes. With both he had just parted for years, perhaps for ever!

His cold, cruel words were still lingering on her ear, pressing all the young life and sweet, bright hopes from her heart—that heart that had been so true to him, the man who had just cast aside her love, as an impediment in his path.

He was ambitious, and the future promised not only a prosperous career, but success and fame. To this end he must devote his every thought, sacrificing on the altar of Ambition the purest impulses of his nature.

"You will forgive me now, Agnes, and after a while be happier. I am not suited to such a gentle little home-dove; and you would be miserable in the world where I must move and live. We may meet in years to come, Agnes, and then you will still be, as now, good and pure; and I—I will have succeeded in my hopes, and be either contented or miserable—wiser, of course, but, I fear, not a better man.

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Good-by! Tell me you forgive me," he said; and putting out his hand, would have drawn her to his bosom. But she drew back, only placing her hand in his, and answered:

"Go! I forgive you. Be happy, if you can. And should we ever meet again, you will tell me then if your choice has given you happiness."

"I will. Farewell!"

And he was gone from her side, and soon entirely from her gaze. And then all the proud, calm bearing she had sustained gave way, and she sank down on the little rustic bench under the great old oak, where many, many times she had sat with him—where he first had won her promise to be his, and where he had sought her again to give back that promise and break his faith with her.

Bitterly she wept for a little while, and then the storm of passionate disappointment, mortification, and sorrow gave way. The fountains of the heart were dried, and she said:

"These shall be the last tears for him. He is unworthy of them. He has cast aside my love only because I cannot contribute, he thinks, to his advancement. He will marry the daughter of some great man, and likely enough break her heart, because she will surely enough find out he does not love her. No, no; for although another will bear his name, his heart, his love is mine. Oh, why cannot I go onward, forward? Why cannot I become great? There is that within me which might, with culture, grow and strengthen, until I could stand before the world his equal. But, oh! what chance has a girl whose every hour is spent in toiling for bread, with scarcely time for rest or sleep—what chance for study, for even thought?

"Five years ago, when he left me, and bade me keep up a good heart and be true to him, as he would return, and then I should toil no more, then he did not think that the time might come when he would think me a stumbling-

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back! Aye, yes, the factory girl is no wife for one who is to represent his adopted State!

"And I toiled on—hoped on! Bright visions of his success, and my sharing it, filled my mind; I, in my constancy to him, casting off the love of a truer heart.

"Oh, the changes of years! Of the past! What *future* may bring, who can tell? I feel sure, whate else, it will not give to Warren Leslie happiness."

The tread of approaching footsteps aroused her, and raising her eyes she beheld the one she had alluded to as the "truer heart," William Allston, coming toward her.

"Weeping, Agnes? Ah! I know—Warren has left you. I met him in the village. He told me he was to leave again to-night. I thought—" He hesitated.

"What? Speak on," she said.

"Well, I thought I might have to bid you farewell—that you would go with him," William Allston replied, his voice growing tremulous.

"No, I shall *never* go with him," she replied, in a low but firm voice.

"*No*—never!" he said, repeating her words, as if he thought he could not trust his ears.

"Never! Now we will talk no more about him," she said, and, rising, placed her hat on, and was about to walk toward the village.

"Stop a moment, Agnes! I came to show you something—perhaps to bring you a ray of sunshine. See here!" He held to her a paper, pointing at the same time to an advertisement; after reading which, she asked:

"Well, what is this to me?"

"Why, Agnes, do you not see? Father saw it, and told me. This is from your father's brother, and he is trying to find you, or any of your father's children."

"Oh, yes, I know now. But really, William, I hardly

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ever think of *that* being my name. You know I was an infant when my own father died; so I have never known anything of his having a brother, and only remember my stepfather, and think always his name as mine. Thank you, William; I will answer this immediately. As you say, 'It may be a ray of sunshine,'" she said, a look of weariness replacing the surprise of a moment before.

"But, oh! Agnes, the ray of sunshine that will illume your path will most likely leave *mine* all the darker. You will probably go to this uncle. But I will rejoice. If your sky grows bright, I am content to have the clouds grow dark in mine," said the devoted man, who had loved Agnes for over five years, without one ray of hope; and when he knew he could not be more to her, he was content to be her friend, sooner than anything dearer to any other woman.

Agnes knew all this, and then she felt the difference in the two men. The one who had left her sacrificed her love to live for ambition, the other would have died to secure her happiness.

"William, where'er I go, your friendship I shall prize very highly, and always think of you with gratitude."

"Oh, Agnes! not gratitude! Oh, if years of toil and waiting would only win *one* thought of—"

"Nay, William, do not talk of that," she said, interrupting him. And then, noticing his look of dejection, she continued: "Of one thing you may be sure. Although I may never be yours, I shall never be any one else's."

A few weeks after, Agnes had left her New England home to find one with her uncle in a far Western State.

She had promised William Allston to write him, and soon the welcomed letter was received, in which she said:

"I have not found a home of riches and splendor, as you predicted, but one of love, and rest from the toil of years. My uncle was entirely alone in the world, and longed for

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some one of his kindred to be with him. He is not at all wealthy, except in the heart's goodness, having only sufficient to keep us in comfort. He is refined, well read, and has, what is wealth to *me*, a very excellent assortment of books. Now I can read, study, and think; what more, the future must tell."

* * * * * *

Ten years had passed since Warren Leslie parted from the girl whom, still loving, he deserted, and married, as she had thought he would, the daughter of one of the leading men of the State, thus taking a great stride on the path of popularity and success. But she who had so much contributed to his advancement lived not to enjoy his triumph. And when in the Senate chamber of the national capitol he stood, one of the leading men of the time, he was also considered the most desirable object for matrimonial speculation and intrigue.

Did his mind never turn back to the love of his youth?

Yes, often, and his heart pleaded earnestly for that love, but pride whispered she was not the mate for him. Again he must choose one from those of high position, in the same circle wherein he moved.

The Senate galleries were crowded by the *elité* of Washington to hear the first speech of the new Senator from ——. Vainly the beautiful girls and their anxious mammas watched for a glance, or some token of recognition, from the distinguished man; but his eyes sought only one face among them all, and often earnestly his glance lingered there. Immediately after his conclusion, he proceeded to the side of a colleague, and asked:

"Who is that lady accompanying your wife?"

"Why, do you not know? That is Miss Jewell from ——. You know her well enough by reputation. She is one of the most gifted women of the age. Strange you

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have never met her! However, she only reached here yesterday."

"You will present me? She is very like—no, not quite that; but she reminds me much of a friend of my youth. I must know her!"

"Aye, and go the way of many others. She was here last season, and made sad havoc with the hearts of many. Indeed, I know more than one of our friends here who would willingly resign his position to secure her favor."

That night the Hon. Warren Leslie again saw Miss Jewell. Only when in perfect repose, her features reminded him of Agnes Archer. When she spoke, the likeness faded. What could there be of resemblance between the elegant accomplished, and gifted woman—beautiful, too, with the grace of a fairy, combined with queenly dignity—and the pretty village girl, simple, uncultured, and unknown?

Warren Leslie soon not only loved, but really worshipped that gifted woman.

His pride was severely piqued by the calm indifference with which she received his homage.

"She must, she shall be mine!" he said. Yet he dared not lay his heart, his laurels, at her feet. Had not fame crowned her too? Would she care for his?

The papers reporting the speech of the new Senator, called him the self-made man." And a few days after there appeared in the columns of one of the leading journals of the day a reply, or rather a criticism, on that report. The writer, giving full credit to the brilliancy of the speech, the power and force of its argument, and so on, said:

"The man you call 'self-made,' is he so? I say, *No*. There are none such. Where is the mother who bore him, who with her holy teachings first planted in his heart the best, the purest impulses of his nature; who first discovered the earliest buds of genius; who toiled for, and sacrificed

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herself to draw forth his talents? the sisters, whose girlish love for pretty, womanly things, was all sacrificed that *he* should be given all they could to help him onward in his heart's desire? Yes; they give their all—their life often—working day and night until their days of toil are over, that he shall grow great. And when the goal is gained, *they* know it not. And the world called such men *self-made!*"

Warren Leslie saw that, of course, and felt sure from whom it came. He called on Miss Jewell, and said, pointing to the piece:

"This is yours. I cannot argue against it, principally because it is from you; again, because much of it is true; and more than all, because one woman can make me now more than ever woman has before; not only a greater man, but a better, a happier one. You know I love you! I can offer you nothing that you have not, perhaps, but a life's devotion. Will you accept it, Miss Jewell?"

She had always addressed him as Senator Leslie—then she answered:

"You are too late, Warren Leslie."

There was something in her tone that caused him to gaze eagerly, inquiringly into her eyes, and there see a look that brought thoughts of Agnes Archer more forcibly to his mind.

"Has ten years so changed the village maiden that the one who knew her best knows her no more? Warren Leslie, ten years ago you promised me, should we ever meet again, you would tell me if you had gained happiness."

He stood gazing wildly upon her, speechless for a moment, and then springing forward, he caught her hands and exclaimed:

"Agnes, I know you now; and now I know why I have so loved one I thought another. Forgive! forgive! and bid me hope! No, no, I have never been happy!"

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"I cannot. Years ago you cast all hope from my heart. Freely I forgive you, Warren Leslie, but that is all; yours I can never be!"

"Agnes, Agnes, explain this mystery. Oh that I could recall the past, and grasp that happiness that I might have gained! Where is that gentle, loving girl? Tell me how came she so cold and cruel?"

And then she told the story of the ten years past. Her uncle's loving protection; his help and encouragement in her studies and thirst for knowledge; the discovery of talents, their trial, and final success; and then, in conclusion, she said

"You cannot wonder that my love for you died out, never to be rekindled. You left me in my loneliness; never once glancing back from your victorious journey, to see or care how desolate I might be. Oh, Warren Leslie, the woman you thought could not aid your ambition you cast off. Go! You must seek for love elsewhere! But we may be friends. And there is another friend of your youth who would like very much to see you. I left him to receive you."

He looked inquiringly at her, and she said:

"William Allston."

"Agnes," Warren Leslie said, his voice growing thick and tremulous, "he loved you years ago. How is it now?"

A beautiful blush suffused her fair face, and she answered:

"I have promised to be his."

"*You!* you who can claim the homage of the greatest men of the day, you will—"

"Yes," she replied, interrupting him. "I will turn from the great men here to find one greater than all, to the woman whom he has loved for years, for she knows that he is good, constant, and true."

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HOW THEY PAID HIM.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Deuced bad luck you had last night, Will. You must do better next time. Five hundred! That's heavy on a new beginner. Shall you try again to-night?"

"What say? Oh, excuse me. I was looking to see what is going on across there. Are those folks moving? And if so, what is that woman crying about? How pretty she is, or would be, if she had not such a woe-begone look. How I hate to see a woman crying!"

"Ha! ah! If you are not a green one. So as the woman is not crying about you, I do not see that you need worry. Wait until that time comes, my boy, when blue eyes will look pleadingly into yours, and then fill and overflow, or black ones flash fire first, and then pour forth torrents of tears, because you stayed out an hour late the night before, or hesitated about paying a thousand dollars for a shawl or some new fancy. Then you may talk about *hating* to see a woman cry. But say: how do you feel about trying your luck again to-night!"

"Never mind about *that* now. I'm trying to make out what is the trouble over the way."

"Why, one with half an eye can see. There is an execution on the goods, chattels, and so on. A distrain for rent, I mean. See that amiable looking individual who has the honor of conducting this pleasant little affair. Don't be

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seem to relish it? Hillo! what's the matter? Where are you going, Will.?" his friend sang out.

But Will. either heard him not, or heeded not the call, for he was across the street—his eyes flashing, fists doubled and in a very threatening attitude he stood before the officer, and said:

"Carry that chair back!"

The man turned to confront a tall, fine looking young man, whose general appearance told unmistakably of wealth and refinement. This produced an effect undoubtedly on the man, who hesitated, as if not knowing just what to do. But when Will. Hastings again exclaimed:

"That chair I'm speaking about. Take it back."

"Sir, do you know you are interrupting the course of the law?" said the very disagreeable individual, trying to assume an air of dignity and authority.

"I know this. I'm going to interrupt and stop your taking away that chair. Now what's to pay!"

As he said this, he caught hold of the chair, and quickly ascending the few steps at the door, deposited it in the room. As the young woman came forward, her face changed from its distressed look to one of astonishment. William Hastings hesitated an instant, and then said:

"Excuse me, madam; I do not just understand this affair, but only that I hated to see this chair taken from you, and so I've brought it back again."

What was there about the chair that appealed so directly to the young man's heart!

It was a pretty, comfortable little sewing chair truly, and of make and materials much finer than the other articles which were standing on the sidewalk. But what of that? How many handsome chairs had he seen every day. Ah! it was the memories which the little sewing chair called up—thoughts the purest and sweetest of his life. In just such

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a little chair sat his mother, as by her side he learned his prayers. Although ten years had passed since the last time he lingered near, listening to her gentle, loving words, it seemed but yesterday. The sweet low voice he could hear even then, praying God's blessing and guidance on her boy. Yes, mother was away among the angels: but in her boy's heart, her memory was the dearest thing he knew or felt.

Still gazing with amazement on the retreating form of the young man, Mary Walton saw him approach the officer, and say, in a more composed manner:

"Now, sir, if you will tell me what you were about doing and what *I* shall do to stop your proceeding any further, I think we can better understand each other, and come to terms, most likely."

The man was quite relieved to see the changed mood in one to whom he *knew*, from the first moment, he would have to yield, law or not on his side. In truth, he was one of those individuals that during all his life had been accustomed to rule, oppress and tyrannize over those he could, and in his turn to submit directly to a superiority in any form—mind, money or muscle. In Will. Hastings the three were combined, and Constable Force was well pleased to see a chance of compromise.

"Well, sir, I was about to proceed with my duty. I have in my hand now an execution on the household effects of—"

"There; just stop! I do not want to hear any of that; none of your Smith *versus* Brown, so on, and so on. Only to the point. What is to pay?"

"Four months' rent, fifteen dollars a month; costs, and so on, five dollars eighty-seven cents. Total, sixty-five dollars eighty-seven cents."

"Is that all?"

"Yes, sir."

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Down went Will. Hastings' hand into his pocket, and drawing forth his wallet, he was about opening it, when his friend put his hand on his arm and said:

"Don't be a fool, Will! What is this affair to you? If you commence this way of amusing yourself, you'll find a crying woman or child on every door-step, waiting your passing by. This is an every-day affair. You have to get used to it. If you undertake to pay every fellow's house rent, you'll soon find yourself at the bottom of your pile, I'll tell you. Put up your money, and come on."

"I have commenced this, and shall go through with it," said Hastings decidedly: and drawing forth a roll of notes, he counted out the sum named, and placed it in the hands of the officer, saying:

"Now put those things back in their places," and was about moving away, when the man said, turning to Will's friend:

"Excuse me, sir; but Mister there is a green one sure. He's going off without any papers being signed; not knowing my name, nor who he has helped, and neither of us knowing his."

Will. hearing a part of the man's remark, turned and said:

"True enough; I never thought of that. Go in and explain to the folks, and give them a receipt for the money paid. I guess that is all that's necessary."

Just at that moment a little girl of about five years came running down the steps, and catching hold of Will. Hastings' hand, said:

"Please, sir, come! Mamma say come! Papa say come! Please come!" and she held fast his hand, trying to draw him with her.

Following the little one and the constable, who was already standing in the door, waiting his entrance, Hastings went into the house.

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Several of the articles removed had been returned to the room, and two men were busy bringing in the others. The pretty little woman came eagerly toward Mr. Hastings, saying:

"How is this? Come, sir; see my husband. Tell him how this good luck comes to us. I cannot understand—"

"Just please get from this man some acknowledgment of the payment, and send him off," answered Will., who really did not know just how to explain why he had done the good deed: the doing it came naturally enough, but the why for, was what he could scarcely divine himself.

The pen, ink and paper were soon brought forth, the receipt written, signed, and in Mary Walton's hand; and Constable Force bowed himself out, after having expressed great gratification at the agreeable termination of his unpleasant business. Again Will. Hastings was about making his retreat, when Mary said:

"Now come in to see my husband. He is too sick to get here to you."

The little girl, seeing how happy her mother seemed, was so joyous, and clapping her tiny hands, sang out:

"Yes, come to see papa. Make papa well! Good, pretty gentleman!" And holding his hand, patting, caressing and kissing it, she drew him into the next room.

Seated in an arm-chair, pale and very sick-looking, was a young man. He made an effort as if to rise and welcome the new-comer, but sank back, saying in a feeble voice:

"Excuse my not rising, sir. I'm still very weak—"

"Please do not try, or to talk either. It is all right now. That fellow has gone. Can I help you in any way?"

"Tell me your name, and why you have been our friend in this hour of need? How can we thank you!" said the sick man.

Will. told him who he was, adding

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"I think that little chair over there appealed to my heart. My mother used one like it. It brought memories of her pure teachings, and—Well, I could not bear to see that rough fellow taking it off. That is all. Now don't talk of thanks. I'm glad I could help you."

Mary had turned aside to wipe away her tears.

After a moment, to calm the emotion of gratitude and joy which agitated his whole being, Mr. Walton said:

"I cannot express how much we feel. You will find your reward. It must surely come."

And then they both told of his long illness, which had so much increased their expenses that they could not meet the rent due from month to month, until four had passed, when the agent, getting impatient, had ordered the distrain.

"But now I shall soon be strong enough to go back to my work, and shall get even again," Mr. Walton said; and added, "And then where shall I address you, to return the amount you have paid for us!"

"I'll come in again one of these days, and when I want the money I will tell you. Do not think any more of it. I'm going to travel for some time; years may pass before my return, so you will have plenty of time to get ahead in the world before you hear from me," Will. answered, bidding good-bye, anxious to get away from their words of thanks and prayer for blessings.

The little winsome baby girl followed him to the door, saying:

"Kiss by-by, good, pretty gentleman."

Will. Hastings stooped to the little one's caressing arms, pressed his lips to hers, and quickly drawing from his pocket another note, said:

"There run to your mother, and tell her to get you some candy."

He escaped at last, closed the door, and joined his friend,

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who still waited at the corner, and whose first salutation was:

"A fit subject for the lunatic asylum, I swear. You want a keeper, Will. A cheap amusement, really!"

"Much more so than last night's game; less than one-fifth the amount, and the remembrance decidedly more agreeable. Another thing, the one is lost for ever. This little mite I can get, should I ever wish: and who knows what the future may bring forth?"

"That last remark is true enough. That you may need it is more than likely, if you go on at this rate. But you'll get better sense after a while."

"Hardened, you mean," suggested Will.

Years had passed, and taken with them much of the trusting, confiding nature of William Hastings. At thirty-six, he was a very different man from the Will. Hastings of twenty-three. Hardened, perhaps—or *sensible*, as his friend had predicted. What had time brought him, save disappointment in every form? He had little faith in man—less in woman. The influence of one so pure and holy had long since given place to another's—one young and beautiful, in whom were centred all love, hope and trust. If his mother's memory and image had not been forgotten for love of the bewitching girl who held him subject to her will, no longer was it the power that ruled his best actions. His every thought was of the girl he loved, and how to please and make her happy. And for all the love and wealth he lavished on her, she returned him ingratitude, faithlessness, desertion. When only three years his wife, she fled, leaving a helpless babe to be a constant reminder of the unnatural mother who had so wrecked a noble heart.

The little girl was truly motherless when again William Hastings returned to his native city. The erring woman had been found, forgiven, and laid to rest in a foreign land.

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Sauntering along the street one day, he met his old friend George Landon, who, after a cordial greeting, joined him. A little way they had walked, when George said:

"Look there, Will.! Do you remember that house? I wonder if time has not brought you experience? 'Pon my word, you were an origina lone in those days. By the by, did you ever get your money back?"

Hastings had been listening with a puzzled look as his friend went on talking, and when he concluded, said:

"I don't know what you are talking about."

"Why, man, that's where you paid a fellow's rent, all because of a woman's tears. Don't you remember now? Have you ever called for your money?"

"Yes, now I do remember. But it had passed from my mind. Perhaps I may call some day to see if *they* remember it. I guess not. Well, it's better not to be troubled by memory," answered Hastings, in a sad, nay, bitter voice.

A few evenings after, when again passing the house, which had been so much altered and improved that he never would have recognized it but for his friend calling his attention to it, William Hastings felt a curiosity to know if the Waltons still lived there, and if they would remember him.

"I'll go in anyhow, and see," he thought.

It was when the twilight was deepening into darkness that he entered the litte flower-garden in front of the house, and walking up to the pretty porch, was about ascending, when a low, sweet voice, singing, fell on his ear. A little evening hymn of lullaby she sang, and William Hastings stopped to listen. Soon it was finished, and the same sweet voice said:

"Now, Willie, your prayer, and then to sleep."

The lisping voice repeated after hers the words—blessings on the loved ones near; and then followed another petition, which not only reached the listener's ear, but sank deep in-

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to his heart, stirring up and bringing forth memories that had slumbered for many years: "Bless the good man, father's and mother's friend, wherever he may be. Make him happy, and keep him from harm. Amen."

"Sister, what's the dood man's name!" asked the lisping voice.

"Oh, Willie! you are not half as smart as I was. I always remember *his* name, and you forget your own," said another voice.

"Me's Willie Hastin'," said the baby boy.

An exclamation escaped the listener's lips then, and a movement in the room caused him to think he had better make known his presence. So William Hastings touched the bell, and in another moment a young girl stood before him.

"Is Mr. or Mrs. Walton in?" he inquired.

"No, sir; but they will be very soon. Will you come in?"

"Thank you, yes."

And William Hastings entered the pretty and tastefully arranged parlor. The shaded lamp was brightened, and never had he seen a sweeter face than May Walton's. He was wondering if she could possibly be the baby girl whose little arms encircled his neck that day, so long ago, when coming steps announced the return of her parents.

Mr. Walton approached with an inquiring expression on his fine face, and William Hastings said:

"I cannot expect you to remember me; I am—"

"Yes, yes; I remember. Could I ever forget you, Mr. Hastings!" exclaimed Mrs. Walton, coming forward and clasping his hand with a warmth and cordiality which William Hastings felt came from the heart.

"Welcome! welcome! And why have you kept us waiting for this pleasure so long?" said Mr. Walton.

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William Hastings told of his recent return, and then inquired for his baby friend. May was called in. The roses gathered and brightened on her beautiful face, when her father told her how freely she gave her kisses to their friend in that time of shadows and sunshine. And then little Willie, his namesake sleeping, was shown him.

The hours passed swiftly by, until William Hastings knew it was quite time to bid good-bye.

Mr. Walton, accompanying him to the door, said:

"To-morrow, if you will give me your address, you shall hear from or see me, Mr. Hastings—"

"Never mind. I shall come often with your permission and we will talk of business some future time," answered Hastings.

"Promise me that you will not go again, without giving me the pleasure of, in a measure, repaying you," said Mr. Walton

"I will, truly," answered William Hastings, bidding good-bye.

"After all, there *is* some faith to be placed in one's fellow men—aye, and women too, I begin to think. I never dreamed any one in the world cared or prayed for my welfare, except my little daughter. If she should be such as Mrs. Walton or her child, I shall find the world has something still to bind me. I've a mind to ask them to take my little Minnie—I *will*. Then she'll be well cared for; and, I pray God, grow something like them," William Hastings said, as he walked home.

The next evening found him, with his little Minnie, pleading for her with the Waltons.

Gladly they welcomed his child. And little Minnie closed her eyes that night on May Walton's bosom.

Of course, to see Minnie, William Hastings was very often at Mr. Walton's. And regularly, at the end of each

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month, a liberal sum was placed in his hands for her board. Every time remonstrances were made, Mr. Walton saying:

"*When* will you allow me to pay *you?*"

"When I feel *safe* in asking you," was the reply, which puzzled the good man's mind considerably.

Little Minnie had been with them six months, when William Hastings came and said:

"Now, Mr. Walton, I come to ask, I fear, a price you may not willingly agree to pay. Years ago you promised that reward was sure to be mine. You can do that now, a hundred fold. Dare I tell you how?"

"Speak, my friend," said Mr. Walton; but his voice trembled, for his eyes had not deceived him, and his heart had grown a little sad to think another man should share the heart where he had reigned so long.

"Give me May?" asked William Hastings.

"And May—what says she?" returned her father.

A little rustling movement, and May's arms were about her father's neck, her lips close to his ear, pleading in low tones:

"Give me to him, papa! He won me years ago, you know."

"Take her, Hastings. She can truly reward you," the father replied, placing her hand in his.

"Heaven's best reward," answered William Hastings reverently.

A few weeks after, when George Landon received cards to his friend's wedding reception, he remarked to a gentleman standing near:

"Such pay as Hastings has received is quite encouraging. To win such a wife as he has, puts a fellow to thinking very favorably of kind actions, and to be almost a believer in rewards in this world, as well as the next."

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THE GOLD BRIDE

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Very rich she is, in virtues,
Very noble, noble certes,
And I shall not blush in knowing
That men call her humbly born."

FRED. HUNTER was as handsome a young officer as ever wore the uniform. He was just a little vain, perhaps. But what wonder? The girls make so much of those young 'West-Pointers," and particularly of Fred., who had just graduated.

After an absence of five years, he came to visit an aunt in the city of W——. His coming was welcomed with joy by all friends, both old and young, for all were fond of the merry-hearted youth of years before. But now they beheld him no longer thus, but a man, "all dignity and grace." And the maiden's hearts beat faster, and oftener they consulted their mirrors and curled anew their tresses, sunny or raven, and wondered if he had brought back his heart. Mammas gazed on him, their hearts filled with misgivings. They knew well some of these joyous young spirits would be saddened when Fred. went away; for although he might very well manage to carry away many hearts, his own he could leave with but one.

Fred. stood on a corner of a street surrounded by several friends, when one said:

"There goes Wilkes, one of your old friends."

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"Who is that beautiful girl with him?" Fred. asked.

"His wife. He has been married three years."

"That's a pity. A physician is no longer so popular after he is married, unless he manages to win a fortune. How has he done?"

"The lady's fortune consists alone in her own virtues," replied Fred.'s friend gallantly.

"That was very foolish in Wilkes. A young man of his abilities ought never to encumber himself with a poor wife. You don't catch me at that game," said Fred.

"But suppose you should chance to love a poor girl?"

"I shall not allow myself to do any such very indiscreet thing. I shall never marry a poor girl. You remember the old adage: 'Love goes out the window when—'"

His remark was cut short just then by the appearance of a young girl, who came past quite near, and bowed to the young man whom Fred. was addressing.

"What a splendid figure! I could not see her face for that provoking vail! Who is she?"

"Some one you used to know—Miss Avery."

"Lou. Avery? No; surely not! It seems but yesterday she was a little romping girl in short dresses. What is she doing here? I've heard her parents were dead!"

"Yes, yes; five years makes many changes. You have not seen her for that time? She is residing with her friend Mrs. Worth, as a protégeé or companion. You must renew your acquaintance, Fred. She is quite a belle—would be *the* 'belle,' were it not for a certain little blonde beauty who is dividing the admiration with the dark-eyed Lou., who is truly a bewitching little creature. Guard well your heart, and your *philosophy* too, for Miss Avery has only the wealth of heart."

"Never fear! Never fear for me!" answered Fred. And he waved them a laughing adieu.

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A few days after the above conversation, Lou. Avery sat alone in her cosy little room. Her thoughts were with the past, when she was a happy, thoughtless child, the darling of her father's heart. Four years before, her father passed from earth; another year, and her mother lay beside him in the quiet little church-yard. Since then Lou. had drifted about on the hard sea of adversity; her warm, loving heart oft chilled by the cold indifference of former friends; the impulsive, unsuspicious nature receiving severe shocks frequently, until the naturally sweet spirit of the orphan girl became imbittered. But before the commencement of our story, Lou. had a haven in the home of her friend Mrs. Worth, and protection and security from the slights of the hard, cruel world. She was happier than she had been for a long while, Mrs. Worth's position securing many advantages for her. This morning, however, she felt a little sad—indeed decidedly blue. She had caught the words of Fred. the evening she passed so near him, but then she little dreamed from whom they came. Only a few hours before, she had learned from Phil. Upton that Lieut. Hunter was in town; and he it was who stood with him a few evenings previous. Lou. remembered the merry Fred. with feelings very near akin to love, and she felt hurt and mortified that he had not called. This, and his remark, which reached her ear, caused poor little Lou's depression. But before the close of that day both heart and brain would be severely tried.

Lou. was handy about almost everything. Her little fingers were brisk, her mind always willing. So all the young and old, boys and girls, old maids and young widows, came with bonnets, caps, neck-ties, and gloves, to be made or mended. This day came Miss Mattie Spicer, a spinster of uncertain age and similar temper, for Lou. to make her a bonnet, the box of material for which was a collection of

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more antiques than Lou. had ever before beheld—flowers, lace, silk, velvet, and ribbon—specimens from the time of Mrs. Noah, Lou. thought, all different in form, quality, color, and fashion. "A bonnet she wanted, and a pretty one too Fashionable of course, but not a patch which could not be seen for the bow of ribbon or flower that covered it. No A sensible bonnet, to cover her head." Lou.'s fingers flew rapidly over the scraps, culling out the least objectionable; *desirable* there were none. In a very short time a neat, sensible bonnet was held up for Miss Mattie's inspection.

Up went the Spicer's nose, down the corners of her mouth, and with a contemptuous sneer she snapped forth:

"Because I don't happen to be a flirt of a girl, I thank you, I need not be supposed to be as old as my grandmother! *That* thing would suit her if she were here."

Among her own collection, Lou. found and used some pretty pieces of lace, and a bow of delicate lavender colored ribbon, and again held up the bonnet, rendered then more youthful. Another sneer, with the remark:

"I am not aware that I belong to the Quakers, or to any sort of people that object to flowers."

Another hunt, and Lou. produced a cluster of purple bells, and was about arranging them, when again Miss Mattie gave vent to her dissatisfaction:

"Purple and gray! Might as well put me in mourning for some one at once!"

In desperation, Lou. drew forth a bunch of bright bluish rose-buds, and quickly the frown and sneer gave place to a smile of satisfaction. At last the bonnet was a perfect success, and the *color de rose* pervaded the atmosphere.

But poor little Lou. caught it not. She was tired and cross. Her patience had gone through a severe trial. The tea bell was ringing. It was too late to dress. Lou. smoothed her hair, donned a clean collar, and was about to leave her

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room, when she heard a soft rustle outside, and a sweet voice asking:

"May I come in?"

A miracle of beauty, Lou. thought, a vision of brightness truly, floated in. Her gossamer robes waving gracefully behind her, came Minnie Mason, her golden hair flowing in long loose tresses over her fair shoulders, among which drooped clusters of blue bells. Blue ribbons adorned her ample robe, shaking out the folds of which, she asked:

"Not dressed yet, Lou.?"

"No; and shall not be this evening! I'm tired. Are you going out, or do you expect company?" asked Lou.

"No; but I felt like fixing up a little. *I* must dress pretty well, to look at all presentable; while you are always charming in anything. I would not alter my dress; that wrapper is very becoming."

"Just please hush, Minnie! I'm not going to listen to any nonsense; nor tell you how you look. You know, and are very well satisfied too. Come down and get some tea with us; then I am going to retire."

No, Minnie only ran in for a moment, and must return; so off she floated again. And Lou. glanced at the fairy vision, then at her own little dark face in the mirror, and followed Miss Mattie to the tea-room. After which the then very amiable maiden insisted that Lou. should walk with her part of the way home.

It was almost dark, and calling the little children Lou. escorted her tormentor as far as she wished. Returning home somewhat restored to her good-humor, she arrived opposite Minnie's home, thinking to pass unnoticed. But Minnie's pleasant tones arrested her steps.

"Lou., dear, *do* come up? Just one little moment, I want you so much!"

pleaded her being in dishabille. But so excuse her.

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Lou. ran up the steps, and Minnie opened the door, and in the full glare of the gas light presented Lieut. Hunter.

A flush of mortification and resentment mantled Lou.'s cheeks, and Minnie exclaimed:

"Now don't be cross. Lou. is always so charming, but she will not let me tell her so."

"This is not the first time I've seen Lou.—excuse me, Miss Avery—in dishabille. I have a remembrance very vivid, of dresses all 'tattered and torn,' and of a youth whose jacket was in such a condition as to bring the wearer well-nigh the undress uniform. Those were happy days, Miss Avery," said Fred. Hunter.

But Lou. was too much hurt and mortified to talk much about old times or new, and soon withdrew; but, much to Minnie's disgust, the gallant Lieutenant followed.

He told Lou. he was on his way to call on her, but his friend had induced him to stop with him to see Miss Mason a few moments; and Lou. felt sure then that Minnie knew all about his coming. An hour afterward when Phil. Upton came in, she learned the truth. He had told Minnie he would stop in on the way, to call on Lou.

After they were gone, Lou.'s wrath could no longer be controlled. With her head buried in Mrs. Worth's lap, she sobbed forth all her complaints:

"Yes, indeed; she drew me up. And there I stood, a dark background, to show off the bright, beautiful picture. I looked ugly, and I felt so. The mean girl! I don't suppose Fred. Hunter will ever want to see me again!"

But he did; and the weeks of his stay were spent much in Lou.'s society. But Minnie did not despair. She held him for hours enchained by her constant flow of wit and sweet songs, those she knew he loved so well.

Poor little Lou.! she never dreamed of Fred.'s loving her Minnie was rich; Minnie was beautiful, and truly bewitching too.

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Fred.'s remark was ever sounding in her ear, and Lou. made up her mind to school her heart to be sensible, and think no more of the handsome officer; just as though girls' hearts were ever taught to be sensible.

Fred.'s leave was over. The next day he must say good-bye, and return to duty.

One of Mrs. Worth's little children had escaped from the nurse, and run off. Lou. went into Mrs. Mason's, the usual resort for the young ones, to hunt for the truant.

She was about entering the drawing-room, when the voice of Fred. arrested her. Glancing through the partially open door, she beheld Minnie standing, her hand clasped in Fred.'s, her beautiful eyes raised to his, looking, oh! so loving. Of course he was returning those tender glances with ardent loving words, Lou. thought.

She stole quietly out, and home. Throwing herself down on the sofa, she wept bitterly—yes, sobbed as though her little heart would break. She knew all along just how it would be, but she did not want to have witnessed her rival's happiness.

She was lost in her sorrow. She heard not the entrance of any one, nor dreamed there was one gazing on her for whom those tears were shed.

A hand was clasping hers. A strong arm encircled her form, and raised her from her drooping posture. Lou. strove to release herself, saying:

"Go away! I am not Minnie."

"Thank Heaven, you are not! Listen, Lou. You have got an article of mine I have come to look after. You must return it, or its equivalent."

Lou. looked up with astonishment, asking:

"What? You are mistaken"

"Not at all. 'Tis my heart, Lou.!"

"Stop, Lieutenant Hunter. Only a few moments ago, you probably said the same thing to Minnie."

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"No, no, Lou. Minnie is very beautiful, and—'

"And I am ugly! I have been so ever since that night! and it was all on account of Miss Mattie's old bonnet. I felt ugly, and never looked so—so much so in my life before, and all the time since!" said Lou. her eyes filling again.

"Then Heaven bless Miss Mattie, and her bonnet too; for they gave me the chance of seeing you as you truly are Listen, little love: 'Fine feathers make fine birds,' 'tis truly said. But men know how much that is worth; or rather, how little. We do not want fine birds; we want something more than that for the home nest—something that will outwear beauty, stand the changes of dress—something to hold our hearts as well as win them. Lou. I want you. I love you only."

"But I am a poor girl. You said you would never—"

"Yes, love, and still stand to it. I have found one rich, very rich. Wealth of the surest foundation will be mine, if you will consent, Lou. Speak, love. Can you love me?"

"I cannot help it," sobbed Lou., her head pillowed on Fred.'s broad breast. "But about Minnie, Fred? I saw you holding her hand," whispered Lou.

"I was only bidding her good-bye, and she was very kindly expressing her regrets, and so on."

"Fred., your friends will laugh at you for forgetting your determination."

"Not so, love. I will soon convince them I have found a rich wife. Men know the worth, the rare wealth of a pure, artless, loving, constant heart. Such riches as taketh not to themselves wings and flee, I have found," said Fred., solemnly.

And little Lou. looked up into his eyes and smiled, and was as "happy, as happy could be."

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FRANK HAWLEY'S LOVE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"CONFOUND him! Oh, I hate him! That fellow was born to be my evil genius. I feel it! I'll never forgive him while life lasts!" exclaimed Stanley Mervin, a youth of eighteen, who had just entered his mother's room and thrown himself on the sofa. His face was really a hand some one, but just then it was disfigured by a dark, angry expression.

"Then you have lost the prize, my boy. Never mind—"

"Never mind! Don't talk to me so, mother. I do mind. To come so near, and then miss it! One confounded problem the cause. Every one expected me to get it. I felt it would be a very close contest. That he is equally deserving I must acknowledge; still that does not help me to bear any better the mortification and disappointment. Usually, before an audience, he is so nervous and agitated that he does not do himself justice. In this fact I was so sure of triumph. But this time he seemed inspired. And so he beat me—not only gaining the prize, but all the smiles and greetings from the girls, which should have been mine. That's what I mind the most! The girls had decided I must win. Curse him!"

"Oh, my boy! pray don't talk so," timidly urged his mother.

"There, mother, it is no use to preach to me. I hate Frank Hawley I know what you want to say; but that's

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act in me. I cannot return a caress for a blow, nor appreciate such natures. If a fellow injures me, I'll pay him for it if I can."

A look of sorrow passed over the mother's face as her son quickly arose and walked angrily out from her presence.

Frank Hawley and Stanley Mervin were class-mates in the High school; near about the same age; equally talented, and both hard students. Stanley was the popular boy of the school, particularly with the girls. Frank Hawley was grave and thoughtful in mien, and his face ever wore a saddened look, as though shadowed by some coming sorrow. Stanley, quite the reverse, was gay and full of fun, ever ready for a frolic; and this it was that made him a general favorite. Still these boys, so very different in disposition, were very much alike in person; indeed, when Frank's face was brightened by a smile, which would sometimes chase the shadow away, or Stanley relapse into a quiet, subdued mood, which was a very rare occurrence, the likeness then was wonderful; every one noticed it. Both were widows' only sons.

The day after the prize was awarded, the youths met again. Frank came forward, put out his hand, and not noticing Stanley's reluctance, clasped his, saying:

"Mervin, I do not rejoice one bit in winning the palm; for *myself*, I was careless about it."

An incredulous sneer darkened Stanley's face.

"Indeed, old fellow, I speak the truth. You see, my mother had fixed her heart on it. She seemed to think as with this contest, so would be my course in life. So, for her sake, I prayed to win; only for *mother's* sake, believe me, else I would have gladly resigned it to you. Everybody wanted you to have it, I know. Come, forgive me,

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severe disappointment, and I cannot feel kindly toward you. Somehow I feel as if this would not be the only contest between us in life. Perhaps a fiercer one might come so we had better keep apart," said Stanley.

"No, no, nothing of the kind can come, for I feel so differently about you. I am drawn irresistibly toward you —perhaps because we are so alike, as some say, yet still so widely different. I love your bright, merry nature; it does me good to hear your happy laugh. We ought to feel near each other, old fellow, both being our mothers only ones. Can nothing unite us? I wish I had a sister, to win your love through her's."

It did not occur to the noble-hearted youth that the time *might* come when a woman's love would be the fiercer contest between them.

It was impossible for Stanley Mervin to resist entirely the earnest, candid manner of Frank; so in a degree his wrath was lessened, and he parted from Frank Hawley in apparent good humor. Still, down deep in his heart lay the old feeling, slumbering only.

Years passed on, each young man pursuing his chosen occupation, until five had gone by. Occasionally they met —Frank always greeting cordially his old school-mate; Stanley returning it with his usual graceful and pleasant manner. But Frank felt the wanting warmth, and knew the old grudge was not all gone.

As ever, Stanley was an universal favorite with the girls. A dozen greeted his coming with the brightest smiles; yet his heart was untouched. To save him, he could not tell who or which he liked the most. Hunting over his drawer one day, viewing with pleasure the many little keepsakes from the girls in his boyhood days, he drew forth a daguerreotype, and opened it. It was the pictured face of a girl about fourteen—a sweet, pretty child's face.

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A merry, pleasant laugh broke forth from Stanley as he gazed on the face a few moments, and then said:

"What a devoted, earnest little bird she was! We had quite a serious time in parting, both imagining ourselves very much in love. Let me see. It lasted about three months, I think. Letters by the half dozen a week! 'Pon my word, I had almost forgotten her. I wonder where she is, and what doing these long years—over six, I believe! She must be now almost a young lady. By my life, about twenty! I wonder if she's engaged, or married? She ought to have grown up a beauty—she had fair promise for it. I'll make some inquiry about her when I see some of the boys who used to be dancing around her."

But Stanley soon forgot again Grace Campbell; surrounded by many lovely girls, he had no thoughts of the absent ones.

A few weeks after, while strolling through the park, he saw approaching him Frank Hawley, escorting a girl more beautiful than any he knew. Still her face was familiar. Before he had time to think where he had seen her, Frank rushed up to him, shook his hand warmly, exclaiming:

"Just the man I most want to see! I should have been after you to-night, to present you to an old friend."

Stanley was gazing admiringly and bewildered on the lovely face.

"Can it be possible you do not recognize her?" asked Frank.

A low, rippling laugh floated out on the breeze, and the girl's eyes danced merrily as in years gone by, bringing back to memory Grace Campbell.

"Grace—Miss Campbell! Is it possible? How very beautiful you have grown!" Stanley was about to say; but checking himself, he continued: "How much you have changed!

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Yes, beautiful was Grace Campbell. In years past, the belle of the High school; then, the belle of the season. How proudly Stanley Mervin escorted her from one place of gay resort to another! Constantly he and Frank met then—almost every night—at Grace Campbell's home. To do Stanley justice, at first he meant not to enter against Frank in a contest for Grace's love. It was only a pride he had of appearing frequently escorting the most beautiful girl in town. Then afterward came the hope of winning her. And the evil spirit came to him, urging him on, and whispering:

"Now for the fierce contest! Triumph over him! You can!"

Daily with her, both men grew to love Grace Campbell with a love neither could subdue.

To Frank Hawley's memory came back those words spoken years before:

"Perhaps a fiercer contest may come."

Aye, it had come. Could he retire? No, no. To him it was more than life. He could not resign her without a struggle for success.

With his usual open, candid spirit, he sought Stanley. Pale and deeply agitated, he accepted the offered chair, and then said:

"Mervin, has it truly come, as you said years ago? Are we again contesting for a prize, now the highest one on earth?"

"I fear so," answered Stanley.

"My God, could I not have been spared this? Stanley, this is the *one* love of my life. Why should you wish to take it from me?"

"Why? Because I love to. We are on equal grounds, Hawley. I shall strive to win her, only retiring when she tells me her love is another's."

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"And I must strive on too—win her love if possible; if not, then be consoled by her happiness, which is dearer than my own."

Very kind Grace Campbell was to Frank Hawley. There was such perfect ease and cordiality in her manner to him, that Stanley Mervin, misunderstanding it, grew really to hate the noble fellow, whom he feared would again win from him the prize. Stanley knew but little of women's ways, although so much in their society. Grace's reserve he believed the result of Frank's influence; but Frank knew better. Still, determined to learn from Grace's own lips his fate, he told his love.

"May you be happy, Grace. Believing, nay, being sure you will be, I will be content. We may never meet again. It is best not, for some time. I am going to a distant state. Try to change Stanley's feelings toward me. And if ever a time should come—we know not what the future may bring—that I can in any way serve you or him, command me to any extent."

Grace was deeply agitated. She knew she possessed the love of one of the noblest hearts that ever lived. She knew, too, that his words were earnest, and even unto death would he serve her and hers.

"Good-bye" trembled upon, yet scarcely escaped his lips. There was a wistful, pleading look in the sad eyes which Grace understood, and going to him, she said:

"Will you take with you a sister's love, Frank?" and raised her lips to his.

One kiss, pure as the angels give, a long embrace, and they parted—never to meet again until in that blessed abode "where there is no marrying nor giving in marriage."

Ere six months had passed, Stanley Mervin and Grace were united.

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As Frank had asked her, Grace sought to make her husband understand and appreciate Frank's noble nature, but in vain.

Time rolled by. Little children gathered in Stanley's home—the first, a boy, bearing his father's name. When the little companion God sent to little Stanley first came, Grace said:

"Call this little one Frank."

But Stanley answered sternly:

"Never! I am astonished that you should think of it, Grace."

A short time after, the war began. Stanley Mervin was one of the first to rush to arms.

On the terrible field of Bull Run they met again. The battle was over. Amid the wounded and dying lay Stanley Mervin, suffering terribly, parched with thirst, wild with fever.

"Water! water! Give me a cup of water!' came the cry from many lips.

"Comrade! here, let me raise your head. Here is water!" said a low, sympathetic voice. And Stanley Mervin's head was raised, his eyes to meet those of Frank Hawley. Suffering as he was, he drew back. In his fevered brain quickly grew fearful, terrible fancies. He thought of Grace, of himself dying and dead, of Frank's love for Grace, and he pushed aside the cup of water, saying:

"Curse you!"

"You are suffering terribly, I know. Drink this, and let me fix you more comfortably. Drink, old fellow Think of your loved ones at home! Live for them!" pleaded the noble man, heeding not the curse, thinking only of Grace and her love for the suffering man.

Too weak longer to resist, Stanley clutched and drained the cup.

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Once more they met, amid the horrors of Andersonville In the same apartment, close side by side for many weeks they were. Oh, the despair of those long days and endless nights!

One day a letter reached Stanley from his wife. How it came he never knew. He found it, on waking, pressed tightly in his closed hand. Grace wrote:

"I have tried in every way to get you home, with but poor hope of success from any human power. Still I feel confident you will be given back to us. This feeling is so strong within me that it seems a certainty. I tell our darlings of your coming. Our every thought is of you, and when you get home, what we shall do to make you comfortable and happy. Praying constantly for this boon, I *know* it will be granted by heaven, through whose agency I cannot tell. But you must only think of living to get back to your loved ones.

"Captain Hawley's mother had a surety of her son's return. She has an intimate and influential friend in the Southern army; through him the exchange will be made. If you should not come as soon as he, send some tidings to your anxious and loving wife."

After reading Grace's letter the bitter feelings grew stronger. Hatred and jealousy raged in the miserable man's bosom, and he thought:

"Yes, in the end he shall triumph. He will return home and console Grace, while I die here."

A few days after, in the gray dawn of morning, there was a little stir within the prison walls. An officer, holding a paper, read out a few names.

Stanley Mervin felt himself raised up, drawn forth, and rushed forward on and on until out into the fresh air. Conscious only of freedom, he followed on with the others. How the hours or days went by he knew not. Nothing

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was distinct until once more he was clasped in loving arms, and a joyous voice was sounding in his ear, crying:

"Oh, I knew you were coming, I knew it, although they told me nay." And then sobs hushed the loved voice.

Her heart was aching as she saw the marks of his suffering. How worn and thin he was! Loving, tender arms drew him gently toward the waiting carriage. They were stopped by a cry:

"Frank! Frank! Oh, where is *my* boy?"

And an aged form drew near; eyes dimmed by long years and weary watching, then eager, and beaming with a mother's love, sought Stanley's. An instant, and then with a sad, pitiful look and quivering lip, she said:

"Oh, I thought I saw *my* boy Frank. Tell me of him. Did he start with you? They told me he was coming."

"I cannot tell. I saw him before we left. I know not of his starting with us—I can remember so little," answered Stanley.

The mother turned away. The disappointment was more than she could bear. Tottering, she was caught and supported by kind ones. A moment more, and a beautiful, bright, satisfied light broke over the aged face, and raising her hand, she cried:

"Yes, yes, there he is! Do you not see? Gone ahead! Before a little, I'm coming, my boy. O Frankie, what joy, joy!"

The bright look faded, the eager eyes closed. God had mercifully relieved the mother's heart. Frank was found by her.

The crowd drew back, awed, and knowing not what to think.

Had she seen her boy? No, no; it was only a dying fancy. Perhaps so; but I think otherwise. And the

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records of Andersonville tell of the death of Captain Frank Hawley after his supposed exchange.

It was many weeks after Stanley's return home before he grew strong enough to talk of his relief, or think how it could have been effected. And when Grace asked again and again, "How was it? By whose aid?" he could only answer:

"I know not. Nothing, save I was pushed out with the others."

One day Grace drew forth the worn suit of clothes which her husband wore on his return, saying:

"I'll put these carefully away, to show our boys when they are older. But what is this? One of my letters hid in this little pocket?"

"Let me see," Stanley said, receiving the paper, unfolding and holding it close before him.

A moment, and with a deep groan he said:

"My God! how unworthy I was, and am, of such devotion! How I little understood that noble heart! Grace, through Frank Hawley's sacrifice I am with you. Read! read!"

"Stanley, dear old fellow! you will soon be with your loved ones. You must go. Grace and the little ones want you. I have but one to watch for me, and that for a little while only, when we shall be united. I am only a miserable wreck at the best, and would have to go soon, any how. Carry to Grace a brother's love, and teach your children to love their parents' friend. God bless you, and give you long years of happiness with your loved ones." FRANK.

Frank's words, spoken that day after winning the prize, came back to Stanley's memory then:

"Can nothing unite us, Stanley?"

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"Oh that he were alive now, to know how—"

"Stanley, do not grieve. Frank has gained more than earth can give. One day we shall all be united, where there will be no contests, no marrying nor giving in marriage; only love—perfect and pure love!"

"We will call this little one—"

Stanley anticipated her words, and said:

"Yes, dear. We will call him Frank, and pray that he may be like the noble man whose name he will bear."

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THE LITTLE ONES ARE SAFE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

All was over. They had placed the lovely little form amid the flowers, and left her slumbering there.

Across the empty crib, her face pressed close to the pillow on which her darling's head had laid, they found the stricken mother. A little shoe, some withered flowers, a piece of cracker, on which were the prints of baby's teeth, were in her hands. She had found what had escaped the eyes of sympathizing friends, when collecting and putting away all that would tell of little Rose. And, with a fresh burst of grief, she held them an instant before her, and then covering them with kisses, put them in her bosom.

"To leave her alone out there, in the cold, dark grave! Oh, let me go stay with her?" she cried.

Again and again they told her of little Rose amid the flowers in the beautiful gardens of heaven—not alone, but with other little angel babes, her head pillowed on the Saviour's bosom—not "coffined," as she said, not in the dark, but ever surrounded with light and love. All was said that affection and sympathy could offer, yet she could not be comforted. None could give her consolation but One; and his peace, as yet, had not entered her heart.

"Why should He take mine? Others have many. Why, why have I been so stricken? How can I believe He doeth all things well? Is it well to take my all—my only one?

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Oh, why could she not have been spared me?" Mary Foster cried, again and again.

"For her own good, and yours, you will believe in time," was told her.

Days and weeks passed without finding her any more resigned. She nursed and cherished her grief.

In vain her husband strove to divert her mind by change of scene. She returned to her home, as he had carried her away, still sorrowing and rebellious.

"Mary, will you go with me, this afternoon, to plant some flowers on Rose's grave?" her husband asked.

Why he should wish to take her there, some wondered.

She readily consented; but asked:

"Where will we get the flowers?"

He told her, as they went out, he knew several places where they could be obtained.

She manifested no interest in anything during their drive, save once, when they passed a nurse carrying a baby girl, a half-smothered sob escaped her lips. George Foster drew the reins, and slackened the speed of his horse, as they neared a house surrounded by a flower-garden.

"We will inquire if we can get them here," he said.

And when they were opposite the door, he gave her the reins and jumped out. Returning in a few moments, he said:

"Get out, Mary, and sit in the porch. It will take some considerable time to get the flowers, and I do not like you to sit here. Something might startle the horse."

She acquiesced. After seating her, George went out with the gardener to select his plants.

A feeble, piteous moan attracted Mary's attention. At the other end of the porch she saw, lying in a woman's arms, a babe, pale, and apparently very sick. She drew near, and bending over the child, asked:

"Is she very sick?"

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"Yes, Madam, and will never be any better, unless it pleases God to take her."

"How can you talk so? This is not your child, surely," Mary said.

"No, she is not. I am her aunt."

"Ah, I felt sure. No mother could speak so calmly of her child's death," Mary quickly answered.

"Is death all that is to be dreaded for our children?" the woman said, a world of sorrow in her tone.

"Oh, I see you know nothing of such a terrible affliction. I have lost my only one. My baby's dead," Mary whispered, sinking to a seat, and weeping bitterly.

Oh, it is a sorrowful cry, "My baby is dead!" and it touched the woman's heart. Yet she spoke not, until Mary's weeping had ceased, and then she said:

"Once I thought I should have to say, as you have, I too must die or go mad. I had a babe, an only one, lying ill—dying, they told me. I could not give her up. I prayed that she might live. 'God knows best what is good for your child,' they told me. 'Pray for strength to say, Thy will be done!' No, no! I thought it was best for me to keep her. And so I prayed, and prayed only for that. My prayer was answered."

"Ah, then you know not *my* sorrow. You have not lost her," Mary said quickly.

"*Lost* her!" The words escaped the mother's lips as a wail of despair.

"She did not die?" Mary said, awed by the mother's tone and manner.

"No, no. Oh, would to God I could say, '*My* baby is dead!' Oh, blessed, comforting words, 'My baby is with God!' Oh, why could I not have bowed to His will, and been now happy n thinking of her safe with Him, watching and waiting for me!"

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"Where is she now?" Mary asked, in a trembling voice.

"Where? Hush! Ask me not. Yet, to bring balm to a mother's heart, I can bear that mine shall bleed anew in answering you.

"She lived—our only one—raised as it were from the grave to be our idol; beautiful, indulged in every way we could Petted, willful, she listened not to our warning voice and—we *lost* her!—lost her, in her first bloom of womanhood! Oh, mother! you have a tender sorrow to bear. Mine is the affliction. Your baby is saved."

Mary was deeply affected. What could she say to that mother? What? She aroused somewhat from her own grief then, to try and comfort another.

"You will find her again. Oh, I am sure of it. You are ever praying, I know, and He will answer your petition. She will return to God, and you."

A coming step, and a little cry, as of joy, came from the sick child just then. Mary turned to see a young woman with a sweet, but sad face, approach and gently take the babe from the one holding him. It was the mother, Mary knew, and said, in a pitying tone:

"How sick he seems! How long has he suffered so?"

"Ever since he had the scarlet fever—over a year. Two other little ones died of it," the mother answered, with quivering lips, and eyes filled with tears.

"How could you bear such sorrow?" Mary asked, weeping herself.

"It is harder to see this little one suffering all the time. If he was with his little sisters, he would be free from pain," the mother said, gently smoothing the baby's head.

George came in then, and looked inquiringly and anxiously at his wife. Seeing a different expression on her face, his eyes shone with a hopeful light, as he bade goodbye, and assisted her to her seat in the buggy.

"Have you all the plants you wish?" Mary asked.

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"Not all. I've engaged some others, a little way further on," George answered. "Here is the place. Will you get out? or shall I get that boy there to stand by the horse?" George asked.

"I think I'd rather get out. It is a lovely place," Mary said, having caught sight of a happy looking woman, who sat under the trees, surrounded by a half dozen bright looking children. She thought she would like to be a little while with a happy mother. She had just left such afflicted ones. The little one bowed pleasantly to George, and placed a rustic chair for Mary.

Just then a merry little boy ran up, and tossed an armful of flowers in the woman's lap, lisping out, "Dive the pretty lady some too."

"What a bright little fellow! How many have you? Mary asked.

"None here—three in Heaven," the little woman answered, a look of sweet content on her face.

"All taken from you! Oh, how hard to lose all!"

"I hope to find them again. I might not, if I had been taken first from them," the mother said.

"And these children?" said Mary.

"Are my neighbor's. I love to have them about me. When my little girl was first taken, I grieved deeply and long, and could not bear to see other little girls of her age. But after a while, I grew to think of her as she really is—a happy little angel, saved from all sorrow or evil. And I felt that we had some one up with God, who would be constantly pleading with him for our good. I thought that there the other little children were guarded by an angel with more love than the other angels would have for them, and I felt as if her pure spirit would hover about and draw from evil her father. He was not so steady then. Now he is all I wish. I think of her as having won his reformation. After

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a few years more, another little girl was taken. Her going was not so hard to bear as the first. 'She is with Katy,' I said 'They were always together here.' The separation hurt her so much. She grieved for her little companion continually. Now they are together again. And I found comfort so. I had still one left. My boy—a noble, handsome little fellow—our pride. His father was quite foolish about him. I feared so much he would spoil him. I dreaded lest he should get into evil, as so many I knew. At length he too grew ill. Then I felt I could not give him up. I prayed that he might live. And one day, while I watched beside his bed, a little bustle in the street caused me to raise my eyes and see, across the way, the only son of my dearest friend, a youth of nineteen, carried from his home handcuffed. Afterward he was convicted of murder, and is still in the State prison. He had been drinking hard, and got into a quarrel and fight with some of his evil companions, which resulted in the death of one. After seeing that dreadful sight, I knelt down and prayed, 'God's will, not mine be done.' That evening my boy called me, and feebly asked, 'Mamma, have I *two* little sisters in Heaven?' I told him Yes. And he put up his little hands and said, 'I see them. They are beckoning me to come. Yes, I'm coming, sisters,' he cried; and thus he left me too."

"And you still live on, and are so cheerful! How is it?" asked Mary.

"What should trouble me now? Are not my darlings safe? Away from the sorrows, temptations and evil? The beautiful things of earth are pleasant to me, but no longer binding. Nothing requires my care. I am only waiting for His permission to find my angel babes. Would I not cling to this life if they were here? Could I ever bear to think of leaving them? No, no. They are safe; and I have no longer a dread of death, for I have angels waiting for me."

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"I am ready, dear," said George, who had, unnoticed by Mary, drawn near, and stood waiting for her.

"Yes, ready, if you are," Mary answered with a sweet smile on her face, the first George had seen since the baby's death. And she pressed the hand of the mother beside her, and said:

"I am coming to see you again. I feel happier for these few moments spent with you."

Mary returned from planting the flowers on her baby's grave, comforted. Peace had entered her soul—"His peace which passeth all understanding."

Mary's loving, anxious husband had sought in every way to bring some consolation to her. Providence directed his steps to the mothers who had suffered so severely. He could have narrated to Mary their sorrow, but he thought it better that she should hear it from the mother's lips. And so he took her to them.

She knew then of an affliction more cruel than death—of a mother who had seen one after another go, until all her darlings had passed from evil and sorrow, and felt resigned to His will. Why should she not think only of the angel child, watching over her, waiting for her—safe in the home of Him, whose love is more perfect than even a mother's love; who knoweth what is best for His little ones—and not of the little lifeless form slumbering in the silent grave? And so she grew soon to think of her little rose. Flowers are blooming on the baby's grave now, and hope in the mother's heart.

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DON'T BORROW.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW RADER

"Neither a borrower nor a lender be.
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry."
—SHAKESPEARE.

"Borrow? No, sir. Not as long as I have my senses about me! I might be induced to *beg*, perhaps; but to *borrow, never!* I'll want for bread, suffer with cold, and go half clothed, aye in Indian style, before I'll borrow!" exclaimed Charley Cameron with so much feeling that he caused his wife to cry out:

"Oh! dear Charley, you'll smash up all my glass and china, if you bring your hand down on the table in that very forcible way!"

"Well, Nellie, you know that subject does agitate me considerably," said Charley rather apologetically.

"Well, look here, my old fellow; when you come down so hard on borrowing you touch *me*, although I am not very sensitive on the subject. Bless you! the shirt I've on now is borrowed; and my best coat is appearing at a reception to-night."

"I would not have worn it to have saved you from the Cannibals!" exclaimed Charley.

"Oh, pshaw: We don't mind it. You have heard it laughingly said that 'it takes a ship's company to get one of the officers ready for a ball.' Well, it is not quite so bad as that; but you know that we have just got in port this morn-

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ing, and having been off on a long cruise, many of us needed a little help in the getting up for our appearance this evening. But do tell me; why you are so opposed to borrowing?" asked Charley's friend.

"Because I've seen people suffer from it. Well, I will tell. It will amuse you, I know, and may do you good too.

"A very particular friend of mine—we will call him Ned Smith—determined to spend his usual vacation during the summer down on the Potomac river, and have a grand time of fishing and crabbing. So, packing his valise with just such clothes as were suitable for the trip, he started, reached his destination, and found several acquaintances, among them some real merry fellows, whom Ned felt quite certain would insure for all a pleasant time; and never had any of them spent two weeks more agreeably.

"The time came for their return, when one of Ned's cousins, living near, issued invitations for her wedding, and insisted on Ned's acting as groom's-man.

"It was a very hastily gotten up affair. They were not to have been married until the next winter; but the gentleman's business called him unexpectedly to Europe. Hence the sudden change in the arrangements.

"There was but two day's notice—not time for Ned to go or send to town for a suitable attire; so he declined, stating his reason. But his cousin pleaded and insisted, and when she told who was the young lady to act as bride's-maid, Ned wished very much that he could be with her. And at length, when it was suggested that one of the other gentlemen, Tom Morrow, should be, if he persisted in his refusal, Ned determined to acquiesce, and trust to luck for 'his getting up' for the occasion.

"The truth was he had met, the winter before, the young lady, Eleanor Marston, and was very much pleased with her. Tom Morrow had several times spoken very highly of her,

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and declared his intention of seeking her acquaintance, on his return home. He had seen her, and admired her very much. So Ned felt a little uneasy about Tom's having so good a chance to do the agreeable to Miss Marston. Tom was a handsome fellow, and very well calculated to please the ladies.

"Upon a close examination of his wardrobe, and the combined consultation of the young gentlemen of the party, it was decided that Ned could make a very presentable appearance, with only one exception—a coat was needed.

"That difficulty was speedily removed. One of the young men had a coat, a perfectly new one, that he had 'never worn;' and he brought it forward, stating that circumstance, and insisted that Ned should accept the loan of it.

"Ned was a little averse to borrowing it, but it was matter of almost necessity; and then, as the owner was very intimate friend, he at length accepted it. Upon trying t on, it was found to fit as if it had been 'made for him,' they said; but it was a very tight fit, and Ned did not feel very comfortable when he first put it on. However, if that had been the only discomfort, it would have been very well.

"The evening before the wedding Eleanor Marston arrived. She was more beautiful than ever, more charming in every way; and Ned's heart was no longer in his own keeping.

"The morning of the wedding-day arrived, and Ned was congratulated by all the boys on his fine appearance.

"The ceremony was about noon; after which there was a dinner party, and dance in the evening. With the dinner, Ned's discomfiture began. He was doing his best to make himself useful as well as ornamental, helping the ladies to cream, ices, and so on. When just handing something of the kind to Miss Eleanor, some awkward fellow knocked up against him, and threw out much of the contents of the sau-

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Endeavoring to save the lady's dress, Ned's coat, or rather his friend's, caught it considerably. The owner was near by—any one with half an eye would have known it was his coat by his look—and jumping up, he began to use a napkin very assiduously, to get off the mixture. Ned felt as if every one in the room knew all about it then. A few moments after he knew many of them did, for the fellow said, in a low tone, but loud enough to be heard by many near, 'Why, the thunder, Ned, must you make a waiter of yourself? Let the servants do that. I hope it won't stain! Think it will?'

"That fellow was beside Ned, watching the welfare of that confounded coat all the time. Nothing more, however, occurred to annoy the miserable man for several hours, and he was getting to feel a little more comfortable, when the dancing began.

"Then Ned was in his glory. He could dance well, and he knew it. Forgetting all about the borrowed coat and its very close fit, he entered into the dance with spirit. They were in the midst of the Virginia Reel. When Ned had just gone through his part he felt a touch on his shoulder, and looking quickly round the coat's owner said in an undertone:

"'I'll swear, Ned, if you fly about in that manner, you'll finish my coat to-night! Be a little more careful. You are perfectly welcome to it, perfectly, only be a little careful. You may want to borrow it again!"

"Ned felt then it would be a relief to pull off the dreadful coat and cast it in the fellow's face. But he could do nothing but bear it. Looking up, he saw Eleanor's eyes dancing merrily, and fixed on him.

"That miserable night came to an end at last, and Ned reached his boarding place. Quickly he drew off the coat, and swore he would never borrow again.

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"The next night the brother of the bride gave the happy couple a party. And of course Ned's duty was there. His friend apologized, and offered it again, saying:

"'Don't be so foolish, Ned! You are just as welcome as if it was your own. I only wanted you to be a little careful as I would be myself.'

"But Ned would not accept it.

"Then Tom Morrow came to the relief.

"'Ned, my coat is not quite as handsome, but I do not think the difference will be noticed at night. Do take it; and feel and act as if it were your own. I do not care if you finish it to-night. I am only too happy, if it will suit you to accept it. I'd think no more of wearing your coat than my own, if I needed it.'

"So, with this very cordial offer, Ned at length donned the coat. But his experience of the night before made him very careful. He was very particular in keeping out of the way of the good things of the supper table.

"Standing by, fanning his lady-love, while she daintily touched her cream, Ned's attention was attracted by Tom, who stood near, and motioning him a little aside, he whispered, but loud enough to be heard by many near:

"'Don't be a fool, Ned! Use that coat as if it was your own. I don't care if you should upset the whole contents of the table on it!'

"Choking down the wrath, and the wrathy words he wanted to speak, Ned looked at Eleanor. Yes, again she knew he was in borrowed clothes. Her laughing eyes told that.

"Thinking to satisfy his friend, he joined in the dance and feeling that his acting as if he was clothed in his own would stop the comments of Tom, Ned again forgot his discomfort.

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"Soon, however, he was brought back to the reality of his situation, for Tom was near, whispering:

"'That's right, boy! Split the coat if you choose. don't care; you are perfectly welcome to use it, abuse it, and finish it, if you choose.'

"Determining never again to place himself in such a situation, Tom was glad when the hour for dispersing came.

"When about waiting on Eleanor to the carriage, Ned found it raining. Quickly obtaining an umbrella, he was holding it over her, thoroughly protecting her from the rain, he thought, when again that terrible fellow sang out:

"'Ned, hold that umbrella over the lady. Never mind the coat, if it gets soaked. I don't care a fig.'

"Oh, that was the last stroke—the feather that broke the camel's back. As Eleanor stepped in the carriage, Ned tore off the coat, threw it at, and himself upon, the owner; and before any one could interfere, gave him a pretty good pommelling and boxing!"

"Ha! ha! Well, I must admit your friend has good cause to be down on borrowing. Well, how did it end? A duel, or a night in the lock-up?"

"Oh, no; nothing of the kind. Those fellows had been worrying me, they admitted, a little beyond endurance. And Tom got up and acknowledged I served him right."

"*You!* Oh! now I understand your feeling on the subject."

"And, you must know, that last feather and its effect was Charley his wife. I saw he had the right spirit. I began to fear he was not the man for me," said Nellie.

"Why, Mrs. Cameron! You admire fighting men, I see!"

"Indeed I do! For I know that the man that can take care of himself, can take care of his wife, and his friends too."

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"Well, after all, Charley," said his friend, "I do not think you need be so very hard on the borrowing subject; for I'm sure, whether your friends were joking or in earnest, that borrowed coat secured you the best luck in the world—a good wife."

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LUCY'S JEWELS.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"I DECLARE, Lucy, full thirty minutes have passed since you have spoken, moved, or even raised your eyes from the one spot in the carpet! A penny, nay, a hundred of them, for your thoughts," said merry Hattie Kennard.

"Oh, I will tell you; and if I am right, Lucy shall own up, and I'll claim the pennies," answered Belle, Hattie's sister.

"Very well; agreed," said Lucy and Hattie simultaneously.

"Well, Lucy has been thinking of three young gentlemen, her most ardent admirers. Gus. Hartley, the handsome, fascinating fellow. Then of Austin Wellworth, Esq. If I were ambitious of wealth, I'd certainly take him. And last, and least too, in Aunty's estimation, I know, John Farleigh; good, honest John, but poor, dreadfully so. Now Lucy has been for the last half hour thinking of these three; if she should make supremely happy one of them, with which would she be happy. Am I right, Lucy?"

After a moment's hesitation, Lucy replied:

"Yes, I was thinking of them, but not just as you have stated it. But you have fairly won the pennies—"

Here she was interrupted by Aunt Hannah:

"I hope not *just* as she stated. The idea! *I* think think there are only two to be considered at present. John Farleigh! I don't know how he presumes to come here.

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Poor! worse than poor, with his mother and sister to support on an income of a thousand dollars a year!"

"Aunty, I believe John Farleigh most worthy. His poverty I very much regret, alike for his mother and sister, as well as himself. But I think them very rich in possessing such a son and brother. However, I don't think you need be uneasy about his coming," answered Lucy.

"You know he loves you," whispered Belle.

"Indeed I think it is quite time you should decide between your lovers. While you are hesitating you may lose the right one."

"Who is he, aunty?"

"Why, who else but Mr. Wellworth? He is the only one you could be sure was not after your fortune, more than yourself," answered Aunt Hannah, as she left them.

Mr. Farleigh failed in business, and died, when his son was about eighteen, leaving the widow and daughter to his charge. Of course his studies had to be abandoned then, and all his time devoted to their support.

If Lucy had a kindlier feeling for John Farleigh than either of the other mentioned gentlemen, her cousins failed to discover it.

A half hour after, the door opened and Lucy's guardian, Mr. Clayton, entered. Smiles were still lingering about his lips, and he said:

"I think you have been teasing your aunt sadly, Lucy. She has just been opening her heart to me. She is very anxious about your selection of a husband."

"I know, Guardy. So she has decided for me. How do you like her choice?"

"I'm glad he's not yours. That is, I hope not."

"Why, Guardy?"

"Because I know nothing certainly of his wealth—only what report says. He may be just what your aunt fears for you."

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"What of Mr. Hartley, sir?" asked Belle.

"A good-natured, good-for-nothing young man, who will spend all he can without earning a dollar."

"And Mr. Farleigh—tell us of him," said Hattie.

"A noble fellow. But not the husband for any one; that is, during his mother's life, unless his sister should marry some one able and willing to care for her mother, or unless some unlooked-for good luck comes to him. John, poor fellow, his life is wedded to those depending on him for support. He has fine talents. His father was anxious for him to study law. Any commands to-day, Lucy?"

"Not to-day, Guardy. Do you remember—next week I shall belong to myself."

"Oh, yes; I've been thinking about it. And you want to let me know now, you are going to be just as extravagant as you choose, and I will have no longer the right to chide. That is it, little lady. Well, I'm quite anxious to see how you will act when you 'belong to yourself,' as you say." And, with a pleasant smile, the good man took leave of them.

Lucy Nelson was an orphan, in the comfortable possession of a hundred thousand dollars; consequently was courted and flattered. Notwithstanding which, she was a sensible, sweet, affectionate girl. And John Fairleigh loved her with all the fervor of his noble, loving heart; yet without hope.

A few evenings after the above conversation, John Farleigh stood in the door of his humble home. Coming down the street, bent, and with feeble steps, he saw an old woman. When she reached his door she stopped, and said, in a low, trembling voice:

"May I stop here and rest a bit on your steps, please?"

"Not on the steps, but come in. Mother will give you a cup of tea. Come." And with tender care he assisted her up the steps, and in, calling, "Mother—Clara, here is an old lady very tired. Make her comfortable, please."

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The door was opened, and a pleasant, gentle-looking woman came out, followed by a beautiful girl of about sixteen, who drew the wearied traveler in, seated her in a comfortable chair, and would have relieved her of her hood and wrappings, but she objected, saying she would rest only a few moments. Clara drew up a stand, and placed a cup of tea and biscuits before the old lady. While she still lingered with them, John came into the room, and said:

"I'm going out now, mother, and may not be in before ten."

"Ah, I know where," answered his mother, as she observed his careful toilet. "Oh, my boy, is it well? She can never be yours. Why will you linger near her? Every hour will make it harder for you to resign her to another, as it must be."

"Don't, don't, mother dear. I must see her—be with her while I may. Do not mention the future. I live only in the present. There, good-bye, I'm off. But stop." Coming up to the old woman, he said, "You have walked far, I know. Now do ride as near your home as possible." And he dropped a piece of silver in her hand. The hand trembled as it closed tightly over the money. He hastened out, and heard not the low-whispered thanks and blessings which reached his mother's ear.

"Yes, yes; you are right. He is good—my noble boy But he has a heavy burden on his young shoulders. Would that it could be otherwise!" Mrs. Fairleigh answered.

The old woman arose to go. They bade her come again whenever she was near. And with many thanks she left them.

The days passed by until the one came which gave Lucy the right ever after to use as she chose her wealth. She entered her guardian's office, and said:

"I've come, Guardy, to crave a birthday boon. You must not refuse."

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"Well, tell me what it is. I'll not refuse unless for your own good."

She bent over him, and whispered in his ear.

He started in real amazement.

"Ten thousand! Why child, what can you want with so much? Oh, I surmise; I heard your cousins talking of a set of diamonds. But really, Lucy, let me advise you—

"No, no, Guardy. You know I might insist, but I only lead. Let me have it, and I'll promise to economize enough to satisfy you for the next three years. And I intend to come to you, as heretofore, for every dollar until—well, until I no longer belong to myself."

"My child, I fear you will make a very poor investment. Diamonds are not likely to increase in value."

"I've not told you if that is what I want the money for," she said.

"Ah, but I know."

"Well, yes, I shall invest that amount in diamonds, if you will insist on my telling you."

The check was drawn, and Lucy went away quite happy, while her guardian felt very anxious indeed. He said:

"She is a good girl, a very good girl, but dreadfully extravagant. She'll go through her fortune right away, if I do not manage to check her. A miserable investment. I must try to make it up in some other way. I'll try my hand at investing for her now."

It was not long before the Fairleighs again saw the old woman, who came to claim their hospitality once more.

"I'm going away," she said. "I wanted to see you again, you were so kind to me. I shall never forget you"

She remained but a little while, and then bade them good-bye. A few moments after, when Clara stooped down to pick up a spool of cotton, she saw, lying behind the arm-chair where the old woman sat, a little black bag, which

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she immediately recognized as belonging to her. Picking it up, she ran out on the front steps, and looked up and down the street, hoping to see the owner, but she was nowhere in sight. Thinking she would most likely miss it and return, she went back. But the evening passed without seeing or hearing again of the old woman. The next morning, Clara said:

"I think we ought to look in the bag, and, if it is of any value, try to find the owner."

John thought so too. It was opened, and, to their great surprise, in it was a note addressed:

"To my kind friends."

Opening which, John read aloud:

"I have not left my bag by mistake. I came to do so. You have all been kind to the old woman you will never see again; but that you may think of her often, she leaves you a token of thanks. It will relieve the young shoulders of their burden, and his heart too, perhaps. You need not try to find me. But a little while and earth will know no more the old woman. I have more than enough still to maintain me, should I live more than the alloted time. You will find with this certificates of money placed in the Union Bank, subject to the order of John Fairleigh. Do with it as you choose. Gratefully, your OLD WOMAN."

John was bewildered—they all were. Could it be real? They were not dreaming surely. Dollars, many thousands, for them!

Although the cashier of the mentioned bank was well known to John Fairleigh, it was not without considerable hesitation that he went to see if such good fortune was really his.

"Yes, it is just so, Mr. Fairleigh. And I was but little less surprised than yourself," answered the cashier.

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"Have you any idea of who the person is?" asked John.

"Not the remotest. I only know that an old lady came here yesterday, and in a perfectly business-like manner made the transaction."

How happy John Fairleigh was—not because of the possession of money, but because he had then the means to obtain a profession. His father's wish and intention could be secured, and his mother and sisters could live comfortably during his years of study and struggling for success. And then hope whispered more—more than that. Dare he listen?

Mr. Clayton insisted many times on seeing Lucy's diamonds. When at length she placed before him the sparkling jewels, he said:

"Well, well, they are very handsome; but our cook has just as good-looking a set—that is, to my eye; but, of course, I'm no judge—and she paid less dollars than you thousands. However, I suppose it is a great thing to feel sure you have real jewels."

"I am perfectly sure of the *worth* of mine, Guardy," said Lucy, with a bright smile.

Mr. Clayton was considerably relieved about the ten thousand so poorly used, for he had made an investment which seemed very certain of more than doubling that amount. Before a year had passed, his own, and all of Lucy's possessions, save three or four thousand, retained for her immediate use, were swept away in a crash which wrecked many others with them.

Bravely Lucy bore it, cheering as best she could her guardian.

"I've a little fortune yet, Guardy. I shall not want," she said.

"A pittance. You have your diamonds, though. Your investment has proved better than mine, child."

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Then cheer up, Guardy. Your boys will prove diamonds to you. And I have mine. So we are both above real want, and will come out all right by and by."

Sooner than Lucy had dreamed came the time to prove who loved the *woman* and who the *heiress*.

The charming Gus. Hartley's and the wealthy Austin Wellworth's ardent devotion grew suddenly very moderate, and finally ceased. The home of Lucy knew them no more. But often came John Fairleigh.

Three years had passed. He was before the people. They felt his great ability. Another year, and he stood one of the ablest lawyers of his time. Then he came and told his love.

"I've been waiting for this for years, John," Lucy answered, placing her hand in his.

"And—can you—do you mean—oh, tell me?"

"That I am yours. My heart has been, ever since I first knew you."

What John answered was intended for Lucy's ear only, and I shall not write it for other eyes.

When Mr. Clayton had given the bride away, and she was no longer her "own woman," she drew him aside and whispered:

"Guardy, I deceived you when I displayed what you thought my diamonds. They were false. *Here* are the real jewels," and she directed his gaze to her husband, his mother—hers—and their sister. Then she told him all about the old woman's investment, and concluded by asking:

"Has it not proved a good investment? Shall I ever want, think you, Guardy?"

"Yes, and no, little Lucy; the best investment in the world. And you will never want—at any rate, for the best thing that earth can give—true love. You are a wise little woman," answered her guardian.

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"This is my secret, divulged only to you. You will keep it?"

"Sacredly, my dear."

Years after, Lucy sent her husband to hunt for an antique jewel. While thus engaged, he found a little silken bag Opening which, he saw a silver coin, with a slip of paper, on which was written, "Given me by dear John, Nov. 7th, 186—."

How swift are our thoughts! how clear and bright, and how simple, the most difficult problem becomes, when we have the key given us! Thus it was that the mystery of years was solved. Chance had given John his wife's secret. It was the only one she had ever kept from him. He would not let her know it was one no longer. He felt it due to her that his mother and sister should not only love her for what she *was*, but also for what she *had* been to them. When John placed in his wife's hand the jewel she had sent him to find, his heart was rejoicing in the knowledge of possessing *one* surpassing other jewels earth can give.

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AUNT ADA'S RUSE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Excellently well done! and God did all.
—SHAKESPEARE.

Half the charms that deck her face
Are due to powder, shreds, and lace.
—GOLDSMITH.

"Oh, Aunt Ada! dear good aunty! I am in so much trouble. You have so often helped me out of scrapes and through difficulties; now pray come to my relief, in my hour of greatest need!" exclaimed little Susie Gleason.

"Why, what is it, Susie? I declare you are really crying!" said Aunt Ada, as Susie sank on a stool at her feet, and dropping her head on her aunty's lap, began to cry.

"Indeed it is a crying matter. You know old Lawyer Aiken, how much he has been coming to our house lately; and you heard mamma saying, last week, that Mr. Aiken thought I was such a good girl, so attentive to mamma, and some flattering speech about my being a household angel, or something of the kind. Well, I was really glad he had so good an opinion of me, because— Well, you know he is Gerald's uncle, and I want him to think well of his nephew's choice. You have known for some time, aunty, that we— Gerald and I—think a great deal of each other. But, O dear! I fear that will end very differently from what we hoped! Mamma told me this morning that Mr Aiken had asked her permission to address me. And she, mamma,

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seems very much pleased, and has almost made me promise, if he asked me to marry him, I will consent."

"Why, Susie, my child, I cannot see this is such a terrible matter, after all! First, Lawyer Aiken is a man of high position, immense wealth, good looking, and very agreeable, I think," said Susie's aunt.

"Then, if you think so well of him, I wish you would take him yourself," said Susie.

"My dear, he will not take me. But if you do not think you can be happy with him, then say so, and don't worry any more about him."

"Oh, Aunty, you do not comprehend half the difficulties. Mamma has set her mind on it; she wants me to live in splendor. She is in such a weak, nervous state, I fear to thwart her wishes. Then, if I should, and vow I will not have Mr. Aiken, I would not dare to marry Gerald; for then his uncle would surely discard him, and I should cause poor Gerald more misfortune than happiness, I fear. Now, what am I to do? I don't see why he did not marry somebody before I was born! Then I shouldn't be worried now! I do not know why he thinks so much of me! He has only seen me three or four times in mamma's dark room. I really don't believe he knows whether I have black eyes or blue, or anything about my looks, for I'm certain he is almost blind. But he tries to hide that!"

"Well, dear, this is more serious than I had thought. But I'll see what can be done. You must not give him an opportunity to ask you just yet. And in the meantime I will set my wits to work, and perhaps we may end this without any serious detriment to Gerald's propects. Why, here he is now!"

"You know the trouble, I see, Gerald," said Susie, as that young gentleman came forward.

"Yes, Susie, the old gentleman asked me last night if I,

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was engaged to you. I told him No, but I was thinking of such a thing. And before I had gotten the words clearly out, he said:

"'Well, think of it no more, sir. I have a wife picked out for you. And for myself, I have thought of Miss Gleason You understand?'

"Now, Susie, you must excuse me. I said:

"'Uncle, I thought you were a great admirer of beauty Miss Gleason is not near so handsome as many of the ladies you know and could marry. She is almost plain looking.'

"'Indeed, sir! And what is that you admire in Miss Gleason, may I ask?'

"'The goodness of her heart, principally. Then she is bright, witty, spirited, and quick at repartee!' I answered, knowing these last possessions he disliked very much. He wants a woman quiet, gentle, submissive, and retiring. Imagine his bringing me to a short stop, by exclaiming:

"'*Those* are just my reasons, sir! What do I care for *beauty*—outward beauty? Nothing, sir! Give me beauty of the *mind* and *heart*, and I care not if she has black eyes or blue, or indeed, I might say, whether she has one or two When Miss Marlow returns from Saratoga, I shall introduce you. You will not find it a difficult matter to become attached to her. She has the qualities you admire!'

"Oh, dear, dear! And this Miss Marlow—have you ever seen her, Gerald?" said Susie

"Yes; she is the daughter of a very old friend of uncle's, ahead of me by about fifteen years. Very wealthy though, and that is what uncle is after for me. And for himself, he wants youth, good looks, good temper. He has a perfect horror of fashionable ladies. I have heard him say often, that 'the women of the present age seemed determined to fully merit the old saying: 'Oh, woman, thou art false!' and that he should not ask any one to become Mrs. Aiken

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until he felt quite certain he should be indebted to *nature* more than the *modistes* for his wife.' So, Susie, to this fact *you* are indebted for the great honor that is to be offered you!" said Gerald.

"Oh! if I only could have a kind fairy come, and not, like Cinderella's, make a beauty of me, but bestow on me all that is requisite to make a very fashionable young lady, and drive off Lawyer Aiken! Really, I would not mind losing all my hair and teeth, and becoming pale and sallow, to get rid of him!" said Susie.

"Come, come; do not be inviting a fairy to come on any such mission! Remember, I've something to say about that, Susie!"

"Gerald, I could supply the deficiencies; and if my heart is not false, you will not mind," said Susie.

"Aye, Susie, darling, you are right. If a woman's heart is true, what matters the rest? Time will change all else, and if the heart is right, the wife will never grow old or less beautiful to her husband," Gerald answered earnestly.

"Do not look so hopeless, Susie. Cheer up, and try to prevent the lawyer from getting a chance to ask you. You need not be rude, only smart and bright, and in the meantime I will try to help you," said Aunt Ada.

"But, Aunty, he will be at our house so many times next week, fixing up some old papers of papa's. Then he will be sure to catch a chance."

"Well, I will come over quite often, and sit with your mother, and help you evade him. Keep up a good heart, Susie, and trust me," said Aunt Ada, as Susie bade her good-bye.

Many times the following week Lawyer Aiken visited Mrs. Gleason's, ostensibly to examine sundry papers, really to get a chance to ask Susie to become Mrs. Aiken. But fortune never favored him. Always Susie was in company

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with her aunt, or by her side he found one of the neighbor's children, a boy of about eight years—a terrible child! all eyes, ears, and tongue. We all know just such; and Jimmie was one that Lawyer Aiken did not like to have about at that time. There was no getting him out of the way; all of the wily lawyer's attempts were fruitless.

Lawyer Aiken was getting very much annoyed at the unexpected delay in his plans, and determined to make a chance the next time he visited Mrs. Gleason's.

She is truly very pretty! Bright looking; very fine complexion; beautiful teeth. Aye, I think I may feel quite sure her beauty is real, bestowed by nature, not paid for with money. Yes, she is the wife for me," said the worthy lawyer. And then, after a few moments of deep thought, he said again, "To be sure I have only seen her in those miserable dark rooms. I wonder why on earth folks will persist in keeping out the Lord's greatest blessings, the sun and light! Yes, I've seen her several times on the street. There, of course, she must have on, as they all do, a provoking vail, thin enough to make them look pretty, thick enough to hide the defects. I guess, however, there is no doubt about her. She is sweet tempered, I know. How kindly she speaks to every one! Well, well, I'll see what to-morrow will offer."

The lawyer was seated by Mrs. Gleason's chair the next day, watching for the coming of Susie.

He soon heard steps in the passage, and thought her coming, when Kitty the cook's voice, in low apologetic tones, reached his ear.

Her words were cut short by others, high-toned, sharp, threatening, and although very unlike her usually sweet voice, unmistakably Susie's. A moment more a fall, a tumbling, and final landing at the bottom of the steps, of something or somebody, followed by Kitty's voice groaning considerably.

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Struck dumb with amazement, Lawyer Aiken gazed inquiringly from Mrs. Gleason to Aunt Ada. The latter, speaking quietly, to relieve her sister's anxiety and surprise, said:

"Do not be frightened. I think it is only Kitty's awkwardness. I will see."

She was opening the door for that purpose, when in came Jimmie, saying:

"Susie pushed Kitty down stairs! and it served her right too; she went and let Susie's—"

A little push from Aunt Ada sent him back through the door, which she shut again, and Mrs. Gleason said:

"I am quite uneasy about Susie; she has been so irritable these last few days I know she must be ill. She is usually indeed always, so sweet and lovely in disposition!"

Lawyer Aiken soon after took his departure. On the door-step he found Jimmie. Calling him to go get some candy, and succeeding in coaxing him away from the house, he inquired what Kitty had done to vex Susie.

"Why, the horrid Kitty let Susie's beautiful curls all burn up in the oven of the kitchen stove!" said Jimmie.

"Susie's curls in the oven! Susie's curls off her head!" gasped the lawyer.

Jimmie got his candy and went back, and the lawyer forward with his reflections:

"Well, after all, I need not mind about the curls, for I remember my mother's curls were off her head, on combs. That was the style then. I'll not worry about that. Gerald spoke of her being spirited, and quick at repartee. I can certify she is the first, and I guess Kitty thinks she is quick with hands as well as tongue. However, it is very well to have a wife who will make her servant fear her somewhat. Of course, I shall have to curb and direct that."

The next day again found Lawyer Aiken at Mrs. Glea

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son's. Obeying the direction to "walk right up," he entered the room by one door, in time to hear the sound of flying feet, and catch a glimpse of Susie's blue dress, as it was hastily drawn through the opposite door.

Jimmie was there! Dreadful Jimmie! who, laughing and clapping his hands, sang out:

"Susie's run away. She wasn't fixed up."

"Fixed up!" The words jarred unpleasantly on the lawyer's ear. His mind was filled with strange misgivings.

Mrs. Gleason wanted a certain paper examined. Aunt Ada was asked to get it. Just then she was untangling a skein of silk, and directed Mr. Aiken to find it in one of the bureau drawers—she thought the top one.

Quickly the lawyer sprang to do her bidding. Drawing open the drawer, he looked in; starting back, he partly pushed the drawer to, then drew it out again, and gazed into it, with an expression of the most intense amazement.

"Do you see it, Mr. Aiken?" asked Aunt Ada.

"See! No, madam! I see nothing! I mean, I see all, everything," answered the lawyer, looking at her as if he had just awoke from a dream.

"Let me look," said Aunt Ada; and going to the drawer, she said, as if much annoyed:

"Dear me! How very thoughtless I am!" and closing quickly the drawer, she opened the next one, and drew out the paper.

The lawyer acted very strangely, and Mrs. Gleason feared he was not well, and kindly expressed her anxiety. Mr. Aiken looked hastily over the manuscript, and promising to call soon again and look over it more carefully, bade them good morning.

Three weeks after Lawyer Aiken's last visit, Gerald came to see Susie, his face really beaming with happiness.

"Victory, Susie, dear! I have uncle's permission to marry you as soon as I, or rather you, please!"

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"Do te l us about it, Gerald!" said Aunt Ada.

"I will. Well, he called me in, and asked me if I believed Miss Gleason was any different from all the other girls of the time. I answered that I knew she was a true woman, and I cared for nothing more."

"'Go ahead, then. I'll not stand in your way; nor will I find eyes for you either, sir. But I would advise that you'll go some time when you are not expected, and get a peep at your lady-love, or rather, what there is of her that is nature's. Ha! ha! ha! Go on, my boy!' And so here I am, Susie."

"What can he mean, I wonder?"

Aunt Ada was convulsed with laughter then; and motioning the happy pair to follow, proceeded to Mrs. Gleason's room. It was unoccupied; Susie having persuaded her mother to let Kitty walk with her in the garden.

Aunt Ada went to the bureau, and opening the top drawer, called Susie to look in. No wonder the lawyer had started back in almost terror. Susie's great blue eyes grew larger, and quite wild in expression; and then, after a few seconds, mirth played about her ruby lips, and she laughed out, calling Gerald to come and see.

And so must we, for it is quite time we all knew the contents of that drawer. But Gerald must bring them out First he placed on the bureau an immense chignon, with curls long, short, heavy, and wavy; braids thick and thin Then a box with the top off, containing all the mysteries of enamelling. Next a glass of water in which was a full set of teeth. A second more and another glass; when, as he drew it forth, he gave vent to such a peal of laughter that Kitty came flying up to see if her services were needed to eject a lunatic or go for the police.

Catching sight of the glass with its contents in Gerald's hand, she cried out:

"Oh, shure! and it's the doctor yer callin' for. Whose

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eye has popped out? Oh and its alive, shure!" she continued, as Gerald slightly shook the glass, causing the motion.

Yes, it was really a glass eye. What next Gerald might have drawn forth I cannot tell. But Aunt Ada closed the drawer, saying:

"Would not a peep in there have frightened you off?"

"Not a bit! I know many ladies have to supply such deficiencies, and I guess they find some one to love them Besides, the old gentleman said he was after beauty of the mind and heart. Oh, it is a capital joke, Aunt Ada! And when he finds out, he can only blame himself. How can we thank you?"

"I know. One good turn deserves another. You must try and send your uncle to Aunt Ada to get comforted," said Susie; and she added mischievously, "You had an eye to the future—you know you had, Aunt Ada—when you were damaging my prospects."

Susie and Gerald were soon after united, and not until then did the lawyer find out his mistake. And sure enough, he found comfort in Aunt Ada's society. And after making quite sure that the contents of the drawer did not belong to her, he made her Mrs. Aiken. And then she told him how he had been tricked. Merrily then he laughed with the rest, but insisted, with Susie, that Aunt Ada knew what she was after. And al agreed that if the *heart* is true, what matters aught else?

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THAT OLD MAID.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADER.

> A creature not too bright or good
> For human nature's daily food;
> For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
> Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.—Wen

The first remembrance I have of my mother must have been when I was about three years old, of romping and chasing butterflies through the beautiful grounds surrounding our home, with a young girl, my constant companion and playmate. I can perfectly remember the old nurse, who seemed to have as much care of her as myself, trying to make me call my pretty playmate "Mamma," instead of "Rosie," as I always did.

Of my father, nothing is clear. Indeed, I do not remember ever having one, until I was led into the great drawing-room one day, and lifted up to gaze on "my father," they said. Very well, even now, long years as it has been, can I remember the feeling of awe and fright which possessed me when, as they bade me, I pressed my lips on that pale, cold brow. "Dead," they said he was. I was very lonesome for some time after that, for my pretty mamma no longer played with me. She was quiet, and her merry, laughing voice was hushed. To this day I have a horror of black.

My first thoughts of care, or sorrow, were commenced then, and seemed to me entirely attributable to the black garb

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which clothed every one I loved. But gradually the gloom wore away, and again Rosie and I were happy. I did not, and would not, call her mamma, or mother, until I grew to be a big boy; and then only before the other boys or strangers. The idea of that beautiful young girl being my mother, I could never understand. My grandmother was with us. She was the mother I claimed. I loved her dearly, and was proud of her. Her matronly beauty and gentle dignity fully satisfied my ideas of what a *boy's* mother *should be.*

When I became old enough to understand, I learned much from my old nurse. She told me my mother was a child when her parents gave her to my father, who was many, many years older than her. But he was immensely rich, and loved the pretty child; and so they were well pleased when General Neville wooed their daughter.

And she, the child wife, was happy in the old man's love; and afterwards with her babe. She never had cause to regret her marriage, and sincerely mourned my father's loss. She was only little more then twenty when he died, and I about five years old.

I was never separated from her for one day until I was eighteen. I attended a preparatory school near home, up to that time, and then came the separation. I was sent to college. It was a severe trial for me to leave her—mother, friend, companion, all, to me. Often I have heard friends laugh, and say something about another love coming to both, and separating us; that mother was young, and would surely marry again. I did not feel very uneasy; for knowing she had been a widow thirteen years, I thought if, during that time, she had never known love for any other than her boy, I might rest easy about the future. However, I concluded to give her a word of warning when parting, and received her promise.

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"No, no, my boy; do not fear. Never will my heart wander from you. And you, Marcy, will be constant to your mother. We will live for each other, and spend our days here, in the old homestead, after your college life is over."

And so, pledged to each other, I went away satisfied.

My first vacation I returned home, and found my mother more beautiful than ever, and had no cause to feel at all uneasy about any one winning her love from me. No gentleman visited the house but the family physician and the old lawyer, neither of whom could I regard with any suspicion, as they were both married men.

Returning home at the close of the second year, I found things a little different. Indeed, no lady in the neighborhood entertained so much company as my mother. She said to me:

"My dear Marcy, now that you are about entering society it is necessary that I should secure the best friends for you and surround you by such as your dear father's wealth and his former position entitle you to. A year more, and you will leave your college and take your proper place among your fellow-men."

She made no allusion to our mutual pledge, and seemed to have forgotten it. Still I had no real cause then even, to be uneasy.

But among her guests was one I fancied my mother was a little more attentive to—a very handsome lawyer. And I felt perfectly sure he admired her very much.

Back again, for the last term, I went to my college. The months rolled swiftly by. Again was vacation near, when I received a letter from my mother which not only surprised me dreadfully, but comepletely put to flight any ideas of objecting, remonstrating, or pleading against what had been a dread during the last year, for it was then a reality. Thus she wrote:

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"DEAR MARCY—Believing the time will come when you will think, with me, that a bad promise had better be broken than kept, I take some comfort in the regret I feel in giving you sorrow, even for a little while. This morning I was married to one you have met. I have thought it better to give you so great a surprise, than the chance of objecting and remonstrating, which would not only be very unpleasant, but all in vain. Now, my dear son, do not worry. Be perfectly sure, when your mother gave her heart to the one whose wife she is, her love for her boy was not invaded. Nothing can change that, which is the purest, most lasting emotion of a woman's heart—her mother's love.

We are going for a little trip—probably shall be absent two months. My husband's sister, your maiden aunt, will help your grandma to make your time pass happily until our return, when, I trust, you will welcome me without any regrets, feeling sure your mother has secured happiness. I wish you would try and do likewise.

"Lovingly yours, ——."

Yes, it was the man I feared. In a storm of rage and disappointment I strode up and down the floor. I took my mother's picture from my bosom, and vowed never again to look on the face of her who, I thought, had treated me so cruelly. I resolved to write immediately to my lawyer, and have him demand a settlement of my father's estate; and when in possession of my portion, to leave the country. I would never again visit the "old homestead,' then no longer home to me. Not only had my mother cruelly injured me, I thought, but added really insult, by speaking of my being entertained by her husband's sister, an old maid, my perfect abomination! I, that had all those years kept myself aloof from society, refused the numberless invitations to

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become acquainted with beautiful girls, to be left in the care of a spinster! Ugh! I could see her, in my "mind's eye," then, with her sharp little black eyes, long hooked nose, and cork-screw curls! Every day of forty years, I was sure. Go where she was? Not I—to be enticed into sewing-circle meetings, charity fairs, donation parties, and all such gatherings where maiden ladies generally flourished!

After a few days I grew calmer, and decided to return to my home, wait there my mother's coming, settle up my business, and then commence my travels. I did not write to apprise my grandmother of my coming, and so my arrival was unexpected. No one but the servants were home. I was disappointed at not being welcomed by my grandmother, but very much pleased to know I should be spared, at least for a few hours, the infliction I dreaded so much—my maiden aunt's efforts to entertain me. After making myself comfortable and presentable, I entered the drawing-room, drew a lounging-chair to the window, and seated myself in a position to command the road and see my grandmother when she would be coming home, which would be soon, the servants said.

I had watched possibly a half hour when I beheld, some considerable distance off, and coming at an almost flying rate, a female on horseback. Not grandmother, I felt sure, or my aunt. Neither of them would or could ride like that. As she came nearer, I beheld the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. Very young she seemed, with an abundance of long golden curls blown back from her fair face. On she came, up to the gate, and over, without seeming aware that such an obstacle had been in her way. I was so completely lost in admiration of the beautiful girl and her fine riding, that I did not hasten out and assist her to alight. When I remembered my duty, she was in the hall. I drew back into the recess of the window, as she entered the drawing-room. Tossing off her hat, she sank on the sofa, saying:

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"Dear me. It is awfully dull out here! I wonder when that young one is coming? I've been here a week now, and not a beau has crossed the threshold! But it is not likely that young gentlemen would find their way where they only expect to meet a grandma and a spinster of a certain age."

Already, in those few moments, I had found some little excuse for my mother's loving some one besides her son. In fact, I was beginning to be reconciled to that. Indeed, I might say I was rather glad than otherwise, for it gave me the right to go and do likewise, which I would have no objection to, if I could win that vision of loveliness.

It is no use to go around the truth; I was in love at first sight! I thought, then, it was not just the thing to be hidden there, and hearing what she thought was only heard by herself; so I made a little noise with the chair, and advanced into the room.

A half-suppressed scream fell on my ear, and then she seemed about to fly, when I explained to her who I was, and so on.

With a beautiful smile, she held out her hand, and said:

"I feel as if I knew you very well, from your mother and grandmother I have heard so much of you. It is too bad you should have found no one here."

"I am very well reconciled *now* to that," I said, and meant it too. "You spoke of my mother. Then you are a friend of hers, and visiting here, I hope?" I continued.

A bright flush mantled her face as she answered:

"Yes, I am staying with your grandmother and—"

"My aunt," I said, finishing her reply. "Are you acquainted with that worthy lady, my mother's maiden sister?" I asked.

"Slightly. I met her here this week," she returned with an arch smile.

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'Just as I thought. By that smile I was convinced that Miss Jerusha, or Patience, whatever her name was, was not a very desirable acquisition to any family.

Waiting the return of my grandmother, we became very well acquainted, Annie—she told me that was her name—and I.

Indeed, soon I felt as if I had known her all my life, she was so confiding and kind. We laughed merrily about my maiden aunt, and I plainly spoke my feelings with regard to that dreaded individual.

Soon my grandmother came, and formally presented me to my young friend, Miss Bell.

During the evening my grandmother informed me I should not be annoyed with the society of Miss Moreton—that was the maiden aunt's name—for several days, as she had gone to make a little visit in the neighborhood that day, not expecting my arrival, and it was probable she would not present herself to me perhaps for a week. How I rejoiced! I would make good use of the time during her absence.

Nearly two weeks had passed when, one morning, entering the breakfast-room, I beheld the long-dreaded person, I felt sure, seated with her back to me, the very picture of my imagination—the brown stuff dress, the very same cap—yes, my maiden aunt.

For a fortnight nearly I had been living too happy to expect it could last—such was not for earth—riding, walking, singing, and reading with sweet Annie Bell. Day and night was my heart filled with thoughts of her, and echoing the words my lips were continually whispering: "I love thee, I love thee, sweet Annie!" That morning I had determined to whisper to myself no longer, but speak out to her the dearest hopes of my heart.

No chance of another day's happiness then. She would

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be always prying about, and coming in just when I wished her in the moon. Well, I might as well face the cannon's mouth at once—I had a great deal rather; so, forward I went. I was glad Annie was not near, for one glance of her merry eyes would have upset my decorous conduct.

My grandmother arose to present me. I dared not raise my eyes. The introduction through, Miss Moreton said:

"I was dreadful sorry I was not home to welcome you. It is against my principles to disappoint anybody."

There was something in the voice that caused me to look up. I looked again, longer and nearer. What did I see? A clear, ringing laugh, followed by a low one from grandma, a chuckle from the servant, and, by the removal of the cap, spectacles, and false front hair, I was soon convinced that I was the object of an excellent joke.

"Your maiden aunt, young man—Miss Annabel Moreton! Are you not glad to make her acquaintance?" asked the laughing Annie.

There was no breakfast for me that morning; for as often as I was about to get a taste of anything, Annie's glance of mischief, or some of my remarks repeated in reference to the maiden aunt, would set me off in such a fit of laughter, that eating was impossible.

After teasing me to her heart's content, she fled to the garden; I followed, told her my love, and wooed her to be mine.

"What! would you marry your maiden aunt?" she laughing, asked.

All I answered I will not write here. And she, as it was "against her principles to disappoint any one," made me happy. Soon my mother returned. I welcomed her without one regret. During the evening of her return I noticed she watched Annie and me closely; and then she came and, putting her arms around me, whispered:

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"You can forgive me now, Marcy, and now know, that although we both have learned to love another, we are still as dear to each other. Is it not so, my boy?"

In my eyes she read the answer. She told me afterward that she had intended a pleasant little joke, and hoped for just such an ending. She wanted that I should be as happy as she was.

"And now, you think a bad promise had better be broken than kept, do you not, Marcy?" asked my mother.

"I think I do," I answered, and clasped mother and maiden aunt in one loving embrace.

A few months after, our relative positions were changed, and every hour since I have blessed the day that mother gave me in charge of my maiden aunt.

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A NIGHT OF TERROR.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

As the hall door closed, after the departure of a visitor of Mrs. Graham's, Nettie exclaimed:

"Why, mamma, how very odd it is that your friend, who looks so young and pretty, with such an exquisite complexion, and bright, laughing eyes, should have such gray—no, *white* hair! Why, I don't think there is a dark hair in her head; and she has such an abundance of it too!"

"Yes, Nettie, it does look odd, for one so young—she is a little over thirty—to have such hair. Hers is one of those strange incidents that you have often heard of, and now have seen, where one hour of terror has accomplished most effectually the work of long years; aye, probably the snow of seventy winters would not have so bleached her raven locks as we see them now."

"How long has she been so? What caused it? Mamma, do you know? Please tell me all you can about her. Isn't she a tiny woman! I've seen girls of twelve larger."

"How you rattle on, Nettie! Now keep quiet, and I will tell you all about it.

"Ten years ago, in Virginia, where the nearest neighbors lived at least a mile apart, Mary Southern passed the first years of her married life. Her husband being a lawyer, was necessarily much from home, attending court, which was in session in the town of——, fifteen miles from their home. Always going with him to the gate, and with a bright smile

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bidding h·m good-bye, Mary would watch her husband ride off. to be absent two or three days, as his business was more or less pressing.

"One memorable morning in the month of August, Mary, with her babe in her arms, and another little three-year old child clinging to her hand, followed to bid her husband good-bye. As she raised her face to his, and put up her lips to give and receive his parting kiss, he for the first time noticed that the sweet smile was wanting. On her fair face rested an expression of great anxiety, and he asked:

"'What is it, dear? Something to say, and are not quite sure that it is not childish, eh? Afraid of being laughed at? Come, out with it!'

"'No, not that; but I am afraid of worrying you—that is, making you feel uneasy or sorry about leaving us, if I speak. But, oh! Harry, I *do* feel worse about your going this time than ever before,' she answered, her eyes filling with tears.

"'Why, you are nervous, sure enough. What is the cause? Tell me love.'

"'Oh, it is very foolish, no doubt. But last night, you know, we heard that Watt Wolf had escaped.'

"'Well, dear, if he has, you may be very sure he will not linger in this neighborhood. He is probably out of the State by this time.'

"'Harry, you have forgotten he has vowed vengeance on every one who had anything to do with his conviction, and particularly you,' said Mary in a tremulous voice.

"'Ha, ha, ha! Why, little woman, for that very reason, he will steer far away from here, thinking he would be expected. Rest easy. I'll come back to-night as you are anxious.'

"'No, no, no! I would not have you come through the woods at night for anything. It is for you I am so frightened. Do not come unless you can get off early.'

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"'You remember my engagement will keep me until eight. I will leave directly after, and be with you about ten.'

"'No, Harry, remain in town, and leave Trust here with us, and I shall feel easier.'

"'All right! Here, Trust!' he called, to a huge mastiff who was waiting to accompany his master. The dog came up, and Harry placed his wife's hand on the noble animal's head, and said:

"'Take care of your mistress, old fellow! But, Mary, I assure you, you have no cause for alarm. Now, good-bye.'

"Trust reluctantly followed his mistress home. He was disappointed, it was very evident. But he was ever true to his name, and Mary felt that he would do as his master bade him.

"The manifold duties of the day soon diverted her thoughts, and she grew busy and cheerful again. And so, forgetting the fears of the morning, she gave all the servants, with one exception—the nurse—permission to attend a party given by some of the neighboring servants.

"The babe was sleeping sweetly, and little Harry sitting on the piazza, watching the road, when the nurse called:

"'Come, Harry, get your supper; and then we will go give the chickens theirs.'

"'No; Harry's looking for papa. Harry wants papa to come. Something hurt mamma, if papa don't come!' answered the child, still eagerly watching the road.

"'Little Harry had heard the conversation of the morning, and it had evidently made a deep impression on his mind. When his mother heard his reply, all the alarm she had felt came back with redoubled force, and she began to regret that she had not urged her husband to get excused from his engagement and return home early in the evening.

"Little Harry continued calling for his 'papa,' and Mary

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grew every moment more miserable. Suddenly a wild thought entered her mind.

"Oh, why could not her husband hear the call? Perhaps he might. The infant's cry, borne on the breeze to his ear, would surely bring him home. Glancing at the clock, she saw it was just seven. If he would only start now, he would reach home by nine, she thought.

"'Call papa, Harry, and mother will ask God to send him home to us,' she said. And as little Harry's lisping tones floated out on the night wind, his mother's fervent prayer ascended to Heaven.

"'Thou who knowest all things, direct him. Send him home to us, or stay his footsteps, whichever seems best in Thy sight!' she prayed.

"Still watching and waiting, little Harry sat until his eyes grew weary, and murmuring, 'Papa coming!' his head drooped, and he sank to sleep on the door-step.

"Gently taking him up and placing him on the sofa, Mary said to the nurse:

"'Do not disturb him. We will awake and undress him when his father comes, or when I am ready to retire.'

"It was a glorious night: the moon shining so brightly that it was almost as light as noon-day. And as they sat on the piazza, everything about, and far up the road, was plainly visible.

"Cassie, the nurse, noticing her mistress was uneasy, endeavored to divert her mind by many amusing anecdotes. And after an hour and more spent so, she stepped in the house a moment, returning with a very fine water-melon, and placed it, with a large knife, before Mary.

"Scarce had she opened the melon, when a low growl from Trust caused both Mary and the nurse to look anxiously about. Nothing, however, could they see. But the dog continued his uneasiness.

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"A moment more, and, to their horror, they beheld emerging from behind a cluster of lilac bushes, a huge dark figure.

"Furiously Trust barked then. And when the man, with quick and noiseless step, approached the house, the faithful creature, with a bound, reached and sprung upon the intruder. Another second and a knife gleamed in the moonlight.

"'Trust, off, off, sir! Here! here!' cried Mary. Terrified though she was, her thoughts were swift and bright. Another instant and that sharp steel would reach the faithful heart. She must save him while there was any hope, or until the last moment.

"As Trust, with continued growls, drew off and stationed himself beside his mistress, the dreaded man approached. The hearts of both mistress and maid were appalled. There was no mistaking the truth. Watt Wolf, the outlaw, the house-breaker and burner, the murderer, the robber, the terror of the State, stood before them!

"With a fiendish leer he looked on them, and asked:

"'Do you know me? Or shall I introduce myself?'

"With a powerful effort, Mary tried to conceal her terror, and answered:

"'I never saw you before. I suppose, though, you are hungry, and want something to eat.'

"'Hungry! yes, by —— I am; and thirsty too!' and under his breath he muttered, 'thirsty for revenge!'

"'I will get you something to eat,' Mary said, starting to go in the house.

"'No, you are going to give the alarm. Oh, no, I know you are alone; alone, ha! You can go. Your husband is off for the night, and your servants all across the way, to a party.'

"'You are right. But why should I be alarmed? I am

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glad always, to feed the hungry, or help the needy. I never injured any one in my life. And you will not harm any one who is kind to you. Shall I get the food?' Mary answered, feigning a calmness, in order to delay his intent, whatever it might be, hoping for some relief.

"Oh, she was a brave little woman! And glancing in on her sleeping babes, her trembling heart grew stronger. And clasping more firmly, and trying at the same time to conceal the knife she had used to cut the melon, she determined to sell her life as dearly as possible.

"By one pretext and another, she delayed placing the food before him until he demanded it quickly.

"While he eat, his keen eyes were continually watching Mary and Cassie. Noticing one of the former's hands were concealed, he said:

"'What are you hiding there? Ha! a knife! What are you going to do with it?'

"'Cut some melon. I was about to do it when you came up.'

"'*Put it down now!*' he said, in a menacing tone.

"She laid it on the table, beside the fruit.

"At length he had finished eating, and pushed back his chair. Then, for the first time, Cassie's speech returned. She got up, and approaching, said:

"'Have a piece of this melon? Can I cut some, please, ma'am?' she asked, turning to Mary, and looking with eyes which told so much then.

"'Certainly. Take some, and give this man some. But wait; let me cut a nice piece for Mr. Southern first,' Mary answered, her heart gaining strength again from one hope—to get possession of the knife again.

"Both held knives then, and both knew the other's intent.

"'You are —— cool, or want to make out so. And you

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know that your husband will not come to eat that. And now I have not much time to spare. The servants will be coming soon. Now look at me, ladies! Watt Wolf!—bloody Watt, at your service! Now, Madam, you will come with me, and hand out your money and jewelry. I'll get that before going further,' said the fiend, approaching and putting out his hand to take hold of Mary.

"'Stand back!' cried she. And retreating a step or two back, she held high the knife. And Cassie sprang to her side, and called:

"'Now, Trust! Brave Trust! Help us!'

"They stood, the three, before him. They would fight to the death, he knew. He must change his movements. Separate them, and then he would conquer. He drew forth a pistol, and pointing it to the sleeping boy, said:

"Unless you do as I bid, I'll give that young one a long sleep. Now, what do you say? Quick!'

"Hark! A sound reaches their ears. Near and nearer it comes!

"'What's that?' demanded the wretch.

"'My husband!' Mary returned, never for an instant removing her eyes from the outlaw.

"'You lie!' he said, straining his ears to hear.

"Yes, it was the clatter of a horse's hoofs coming near, very near. The clang of the yard gate confirmed her joy, and his dismay.

"'Fool! to have stopped so long! But *this*—to remember Watt Wolf by!' And he fired the pistol which he held covering the little Harry.

"An agonizing cry, and Mary fell fainting to the floor, as the fiend rushed through the house and out the back way. Trust sprang after him. And Harry Southern, terrified by the report of the pistol, dashed in to find his wife lying apparently dead before him.

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"Cassie, in words scarcely intelligible from terror, made him understand what had happened. Little Harry was unhurt, but awakened by the report of the pistol, which his mother had struck upward at the instant Wolf had pulled the trigger, thus saving the child.

"Restoratives applied, Mary soon was sobbing with joy on her husband's bosom.

"He told her that when he started to fulfill his engagement, he was irresistibly drawn homeward. So deeply was he impressed to hasten, that he could not stop even to send an excuse.

"'For,' he continued, 'I could continually hear—imagine, of course—Harry calling me. And Spott, too, seemed to have caught my humor, for he almost flew home.'

"'What time was it, Harry, when you first felt so?' Mary asked.

"'A few moments after seven. What is it, love? You look so strangely!'

"'Harry, your boy *was* calling you then!' she answered solemnly.

"How strange! How very strange!" exclaimed Nettie. "They both had presentiments, had they not?"

"That was just what Harry Southern said to his wife, and I will answer you with her words. She said she knew but little about presentiments; but of faith and prayer she did. It was quite natural for her to be uneasy that morning, as she had good cause, as it had proved. But his coming home so impressed of the necessity, was surely God's answer to her prayers."

"And was the dreadful man caught?" asked Nettie.

"Yes, Harry went out to call Trust. And after some of the men returned, he went with them to hunt the faithful creature. At length, directed by low, piteous moans, they found him, badly cut in several places, but still clutching and

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holding to the ground the terrible outlaw, almost dead from the effects of his fight with Trust.

"He was taken back to jail, and afterward executed; having previously confessed his intention of completely desolating Harry Southern's home. Thus the country was delivered from the terrible outlaw.

"The next morning after that fearful night, when Mary Southern looked in her glass, it reflected the hair that a few hours before was of a raven hue, as you have seen it to-day."

"Oh, what a misfortune! I should never cease worrying over it. Does she mind it, mamma?"

"No, not at all. I've heard her husband say to her, 'those silvery locks were a constant reminder of what a brave little wife he had.' And in his eyes, I am sure she is far more beautiful than ever before that terrible night

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THE LOST LOVE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Hast thou gone sadly through a dreary night,
And found no light,
No guide, no star to cheer thee through the plain,
No friend, save pain?
Wait, and thy soul shall see, when most forlorn,
Rise a new morn."

THE wheel of the sewing machine suddenly ceased, the little hands fell heavily in her lap, and the wavy brown head of Lilly Peters sank wearily on the table before her.

"Are you so very tired, dear?" asked a sweet, low voice close by.

"Tired! Yes; but not as you are—heart-sick and weary. Will this constant toiling never cease? Oh, I am starving, dying!—not so much for food as air—the pure, fresh air, the blessed sunshine—I tell you, May."

She turned as she called her sister's name. A pang of regret touched her heart then, and stopped the rebellious words that were trembling on her lips. She saw May, so frail, so wan, still plying her needle—stopping only an instant to press her hand to her side, either to stop the wild throbbing of her heart, or to vainly attempt to ease the constant aching there. Lilly felt how much better she was able to toil on than her sister. And when she thought of her cry, "Oh, will this constant toiling never cease?" her heart was trembling with fear, lest too soon May's toil would end. Dear May! Gentle, patient, long-suffering May!

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A tear had stolen unbidden to her eye when Lilly's first murmur reached her ear; but she drove it back. She had no time to weep. Ah, no; poor sewing girls have no time to weep!

"Will this constant toiling never cease?"

When Lilly said that a smile of angelic sweetness broke over her pale face, she knew rest must come soon; rest, if not here, where it would be more perfect. Lilly saw the smile, and divining from whence it came, arose quickly from her seat, and with a dexterous movement succeeded in getting from May, the work, and with her own folded it, putting it away in the closet, closed the door, locked it, and and putting the key in her pocket, said:

"No more work this afternoon. I am determined to have you out in the country this beautiful sunshiny day. Up now, and get ready. Quickly, love!"

"Lilly, you are wild, child! That dress is promised, or rather demanded, for the day after to-morrow. It will take every hour of the time we have to work, to finish it. Give me the key, dear!"

"Indeed, I will not! Wild, you say? Yes, I am wild for a breath of fresh air; wild to enjoy God's blessed sunshine! wild, as a bird, for the green fields and trees! and I will have a few hours of freedom, even if it cost me the cost of madam's patronage. I have two dollars, which will give us a ride out of town, with some fresh milk, and berries too. I will trust to Heaven for more money or work if I lose Madam's. May, dear, don't look at me so! We will have the dress done in time. We can work all the faster for some recreation. Do come, darling! I am fully determined to free you for a few hours, you poor little caged bird!"

May was about to reply, when she was suddenly interrupted by a knock at the door, opening which, Lilly beheld two young ladies, the foremost of whom asked:

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"Is it here I shall find Mademoiselle Marie St. Pierre?' holding forth a card on which was written that name.

Now little May Peters would most likely have sent off the ladies in ignorance of the whereabouts of any such person, had it not been that when she first obtained employment of Madame Bouvet, she informed her that only French girls were connected with her establishment. And Madame, feeling quite sure that May must be of French descent, as her name certainly was "St. Pierre, not Peters," Madame introduced her so, and only thus was she known there. So May, answering the inquiry, invited her visitors in.

An expression of much surprise passed over the handsome face of Miss Charleton, as she sank, apparently quite exhausted, into the chair presented her. After her journey up those long flights of steps to the little attic room, she scarce expected to meet beauty beside which she felt her own face must appear very commonplace—a girl whose quiet dignity and grace would adorn the most fashionable drawing-room. After recovering from her surprise, Miss Charleton explained to May the object of her visit. She had been to the establishment of Madame Bouvet, to change the order relative to the dress for the next evening.

"I have come from Madame to get you to stop work on my satin, which I shall not want to-morrow evening, but in its place a lace overdress, which will be very much less work," said Miss Charleton.

May bowed assent, and inquired:

"Have you the material with you? I will take your directions, if you please."

"O dear, no. Madame has the lace. I never could tell you about the style of making. She understands perfectly what suits me. And she wishes you to come as soon as possible to her, and take the order. By the bye, will you let me see how you are trimming the satin? Madame said it was very elegant," said Miss Charleton.

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Lilly unlocked the closet and handed to her sister the dress, which called forth an exclamation of delight from the owner. Quickly drawing off her gloves, she held the dress up, gazing with marked admiration on the exquisite taste of the trimming. As her jewelled fingers still lingered amid the folds of rich material, May's eyes caught the flash from a sparkling gem. In an instant the waves of crimson tide rushed over her face, and quickly receding, left her paler than before. As she put forth her hand to grasp, for support, the chair beside her, Miss Charleton exclaimed:

"Come, we are losing time. Will you go to Madame immediately, please?"

Lilly's quick eye had noticed May's increasing pallor, and springing to her side, she placed her arms tenderly about her, and said:

"I do not think my sister can go. See, she is really ill now. I was about to get her out into the fresh air for a little rest when you came."

"How provoking!" exclaimed Miss Charleton.

"How distressing!" the young lady who had accompanied her said, coming up, and looking with a pitying eye on the suffering girl beside her.

In a low, tremulous voice, May said:

"Yes, I can go. After a little, I shall get better."

"I think so. Do give her a glass of wine, and she will soon get stronger," Miss Charleton said, turning to Lilly, who quickly filled a glass with water, and held it to her sister's lips. Raising her eyes to the rich girl's, she said in a quivering voice, while a cold, bitter smile was on her face:

"This is the only wine found in the home of the sewing girl."

"I shall be well when I get out into the air. Do not worry, dear," May said. And slowly rising from her chair, she continued, "Now give me my hat and gloves"

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"Julia—here a moment," said Miss Charleton's companion, moving a little aside.

A low conversation for a few moments passed between the two, Miss Charleton seeming rather reluctant to accede to the other—her cousin's—wish. At length she said:

"Well—I suppose I must. You go. I must hurry home."

Turning again to May, who was then ready to start, she said:

"My carriage is below. You better ride to Madame's with my cousin. You will save time."

"And the ride will do you good. Come," said the gentler girl, taking Mary kindly by the hand.

Lilly, ever impulsive, came forward, a sweet, grateful smile wreathing her lips, and said:

"How kind, how good you are! Oh, if others were like you! Yes, the ride will do her good. Thank you, so much."

Miss Charleton was descending the stairs. She cared not to hear the thanks of which she knew she merited no portion.

"I will bring her back to you. She shall not walk. Do not be uneasy; I will take good care of your sister," the kind girl said.

They were gone, and Lilly sat down—not to work, but think. "How different they are! Both moving in the same world of fashion; equally rich, I should think, and yet so unlike. The one, so cold and selfish; the other, all gentleness, sympathy, and pity! Then, among the rich, one can find some with hearts. How I love her! Yes, she can feel for her suffering sister woman," Lilly thought. And so it was. Those two, born equally alike to enjoy all the advantages of wealth, were so different. Although there is too much truth in the saying that "only the poor can feel for

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the poor," yet, thank heaven, it is not so rare a thing as Lilly thought, to find angels of mercy and pity among the rich. Many of the noblest natures, the loveliest and most unselfish spirits, are found among the wealthy women of our land.

Lilly and May Peters were the daughters of a man of education and refinement. Once, in the days of his children's infancy, he was quite wealthy; but reverses came. With a small remnant of his former possessions, he removed to a distance from the scenes of his better days, and endeavored to win a support for his family. Ill health and continued misfortune seemed never to tire in their attendance on him until, when his daughters were just grown to womanhood, his days of sorrow were over.

A year before her father's death, May's beauty and grace had attracted the attention of a young man visiting the village in which they lived. Constantly he sought her society, until she grew to love him with all the devotion of her pure, loving nature. For some unknown reason, Mr. Peters distrusted his daughter's lover, who was a man apparently of wealth, and endeavored to induce her to banish him from her heart and sight. The man whose life had been one of continued disappointments had but little faith in his fellow-man. A few weeks previous to his leaving his children orphans, he saw on May's finger a beautiful and costly ring. Divining immediately from whom it came, he said:

"Give it back, my May. Such a jewel ill becomes the child of poverty."

The good girl would not cause even an imaginary trouble press upon her father's mind, and so gave back to her er the costly gem. But in its place he put a plain circlet ich would not attract her father's attention.

Wear that, May," he said, "until I place another on

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your finger, one which will give me the right to deck you with all the jewels I choose."

Soon after he went back to his city home, with the promise from May, when he returned again in the autumn, he should claim her as his bride.

"When your father finds out how truly I love you, how earnest and determined I am to win you, he will trust in and give you to me, I know; and I will make his remaining days happier than the past, my May."

These were his parting words. But when the autumn days were come, May's heart grew anxious and sad. But one letter had reached her from her lover, and the appointed time went by. The winter days drew near, and still he came not. Poverty pressed sorely on the poor girls. Something they must find to do, or soon they should be without the means to obtain bread. And so they sold their little effects, and went to the great city to obtain work. A year and more had passed, when our story finds the sisters in their comfortless little room, toiling for the merest necessaries of life.

While May was showing to Miss Charleton her dress, on that lady's finger she beheld the ring that had once been hers. The mystery of her lover's long silence was to her fully explained then. He either had never or no longer loved her. The girl who wore that ring was surely his betrothed. This it was that had caused the poor girl's sudden illness.

A couple of hours had passed before May returned. After she had taken the order from Madame, the kind girl, Miss Charleton's cousin, insisted on giving her a longer ride. So when Lilly caught her sister in her arms, as she entered the room, she saw she was much revived, but an additional look of sadness was in her dark eye. And soon the anxious, loving sister knew the cause. May told her all.

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A half hour after, when Lilly was putting on the table their meagre meal, a knock announced another caller. Opening the door, she saw Miss Charleton's coachman, who, stepping in, relieved himself from an armful of bundles, bowed, and said:

"Miss Dora's compliments." Then quickly closed the door, and ran down the steps.

Lilly hastened to untie the parcels, displaying a bottle of wine, a dozen large oranges, a box of delicious strawberries, and a bundle of delicate light crackers. Tears of grateful emotion filled the eyes of the sisters, and Lilly said:

"How kind and thoughtful she is! Now, darling, you will have both the ride and fruit. You will be quite strong after I give you a glass of this wine. Heaven bless the dear, kind Miss Dora! I wonder what her other name is?"

"I do not know; but she seems strangely near to me. Somehow I feel no delicacy in receiving her gifts. She says she is going to her country home in a few days, and if we will come to her, she will give us work through the summer months," May answered.

"Oh, I am so glad—so glad! Then you will grow stronger and well. Oh, May, brighter days are coming to us. Oh, why don't you clap your hands, and let me hear one of your old merry, happy laughs again? My darling I am wild with delight, to think once more we shall breathe the pure air, hear the birds sing, and roam through green fields! Yes, you will surely get quite well then."

May tried, for her sister's sake, to seem pleased; but her heart was very sad.

The next afternoon, when the lace overdress was finished, May carried it to Madame, who told her she must go with it herself to Miss Charleton, that she might make any alterations, if necessary. May would have demurred, but Madame's wish was not to be disregarded. And so the poor girl proceeded to the home of Miss Charleton.

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Dora Walton's kind heart was deeply interested in the beautiful sewing girl. And she talked so much of her, on her return to her cousin's that her brother said:

"I declare, Dora, I am quite anxious to see this girl who seems to have gained such a strange hold on your heart so speedily. You have talked about her until I am very much interested in her. Tell me her name?"

"Marie St. Pierre," Dora answered.

And a look of disappointment came over the handsome face of her brother, as if some scarcely definable hope had entered and been suddenly banished from his heart.

When May entered Miss Charleton's boudoir, she was received by Dora in a really affectionate manner, and her proud cousin wondered how Dora could be so familiar to her seamstress.

The beautiful dress was found to need no change. It was perfect.

As May's little hands were busy looping up the falls of rich lace, and arranging the clusters of flowers amidst them, the plain gold ring, that had never been removed since her lover placed it there, slipped from her finger, which had grown so thin of late, and fell, as she thought, on the floor. In vain she sought it, and with Dora's help. But it was nowhere to be found. Poor May! she thought it was ominous. And with a sigh she tried to reconcile herself, thinking, "What matter is it the ring is lost, when his heart is mine no longer!"

"We will surely find it to-morrow, and I will bring it to you," said Dora, as she bade May good-bye.

Julia Charleton was dressed, ready to start for the ball. The elegant lace robe was a present from Dora's brother, and he was called to inspect and admire it, before Julia put on her wrappings.

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"Is it not exquisite, Harry?" Julia asked, as she turned before his admiring eye.

"It is beautifully arranged. But what is this? said Harry Walton, stooping and disengaging from the tendrils of the the flowers May's little ring.

It was only a plain gold circlet, differing not at all from many others he had seen. Yet it seemed strangely familiar to Harry Walton. He looked eagerly to the inside, and cried out:

"Tell me—how came this here?"

"My dress-maker, Mademoiselle St. Pierre, dropped it while arranging the flowers, and could not find it after," Julia answered, gazing with astonishment at her cousin.

His eyes were glowing with a bright, hopeful light, and when Dora drew near, and whispered:

"What is it, Harry?" he said:

"My dear little sister, I might have thought before of this. Yet 'tis not strange that I did not imagine the French seamstress, Marie St. Pierre, could be my lost love, May Peters. Tell me—where shall I find her? Julia, I will accompany you, and return for you. But in the intervening hours I must find her, my poor stricken love!"

It was rather difficult for Julia to hide her disappointment. She had a feeling something more than cousinly lingering in her heart for the handsome Harry. And although she knew the story of his love, still she had a hope of finally winning him.

May's head rested on the little stand beside her. The work had dropped from her tired fingers. Never before had she felt so sad. No longer a hope of her lover's return lingered in her heart. Lilly, ever watchful, thought her sleeping, and putting aside her own work, turned low and shaded the light, that May might not be disturbed by the glare.

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Scarcely had she seated herself again, when a low knock reached her ear. Thinking it her next neighbor, she opened it cautiously, and whispered, "Hush-sh," pointing to May. "She is sleeping." She smothered the cry of surprise which was on her lips. May had heard the knock and Lilly's whispered warning, but she cared not to arouse from her sad reverie. When the door was gently closed, and no sound reached her ear, the profound silence excited somewhat her curiosity, and she raised her head to see if Lilly had gone out.

There, in the dim light, she saw standing near, and gazing lovingly on her, a tall, manly form. Could she be dreaming? She passed her hand over her eyes and looked again. No, no, it was no dream. With a glad cry she put forth her arms, and was clasped to Harry Walton's heart—a moment only; and with a feeble struggle she withdrew from his embrace, and stood apart, pale, trembling and doubting.

"What is it, love? Why do you look so strangely at me? See, I have found your little ring; or, rather, I think it found and brought me to you. Dear little ring!" he said, pressing it to his lips. "Let me put it back, love?"

He attempted to take her hand. She drew further off and whispered:

"Miss Charleton wears your ring."

"What ring, love," he asked; and in an instant after continued: "Oh, your ring! Dora has had it, and my cousin teased her to loan it to her. Oh, I know now why you look so strangely. That cruel ring made you doubt me, May. You have no cause, my darling. My heart has never wandered for an instant from you. Come to me? I will never lose you again. How pale and thin you are!"

The little ring was in its place again, and May in here—within his arms—telling her sorrows, and hearing the long mysterious silence explained.

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Harry told her that immediately after his return to New York he was summoned to Europe on pressing business. He wrote, telling May of it, and begging her to write to the address he sent her. This letter she never received, and consequently he heard nothing from May in return. Again and again he wrote, with no better success. In the meantime the sisters had left their village home, where he sought them on his return from Europe. And thus it was he lost her.

May had her suspicions about the receipt of Harry's letters, but she did not tell them. All was well then, and she too happy to indulge in even a thought that was not kind and charitable. But Lilly did not hesitate, when alone with her sister, to accuse the village postmaster, who had sought in vain for May's love.

The next day the sisters left their miserable room, and went with Dora to the beautiful country home, to remain a few weeks her loved and honored guests. And then there was a quiet little wedding; and Harry took his wife across the ocean, leaving Lilly to the charge of Dora.

Her husband's loving care and change of scene brought back to May much of her strength; but she had suffered so much, its traces must ever be seen. Dora is scarcely less watchful and devoted to her new sister than Lilly has ever been. And she knows now why it was she loved May, and won an immediate return, when she first knew her. Harry was the connecting link between them.

The sad experience of May and Lilly has not been without its good effects. Dora's circle of acquaintances is very extensive, and among the votaries of fashion she has diffused her knowledge of the trials and suffering of the sewing girls, and has succeeded in having the liberal price paid for work reach the hands of those who earn it, not to the proprietors of the fashionable establishments by whom the poor girls

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are employed, and paid only sufficient to keep body and soul together in a state of torturing existence, while Madame or Monsieur rear their palatial mansions—monuments in memory of hundreds of starving and dying widows and orphans

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DOOMED.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

EVERY person at the South End knew Dick Allen, or Daring Dick, as he was better known, either by sight or reputation. He was the aversion of all good boys, the horror of their mothers, and the constant dread of all the owners of market gardens or well-filled chicken coops. And it invariably happened, if countless ears of corn just ready for use were stolen one night, the next morning either a little strip of husk from the missing article, or a few strands of silk, were sure to be found tangled in Dick's neglected locks, or somewhere sticking to his clothes. He always denied the theft. But who ever believed a word Dick said? He had slept many nights in the station-house, and once or twice had narrowly escaped a criminal indictment. Dick was always suspected, and appearances were always against him. Still nothing very dreadful had ever been clearly proven against him, expect that his associates were very bad boys and worse men.

Poor Dick was without a friend: those who called themselves so being really his worst enemies. Dick bore the odium for their misdeeds, and sometimes the penalty. How often we see it thus—persons whose destiny seems to be continual suffering for the faults of others.

Dick was an orphan. No one claimed him, and he knew of no living relative. He lived with a very doubtful char-

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ester, Pete Cooper, who mended tins and told fortunes for his living.

Dick had never been very merry, but of late he had grown gloomy. He spent hours alone, with his elbows on his knees and head resting on his hands, thinking—plotting mischief, his companions thought; sullen and lazy, Pete Cooper declared.

One day in the early spring, when Pete's business was very dull, he drove Dick forth, telling him to go and turn a penny by *some* means. Money must be had. So the poor boy started in quest of some employment.

In vain, from one place to another, he tried. No one who knew him would give him a job. At length, far off from his usual haunts, he saw several men clearing up, sodding and trimming the trees and plants in the grounds surrounding an elegant residence. He made up his mind to ask to be allowed to help.

"But what's the use?" he said. "It will be like with all the others I've asked. Everybody hates me, and frowns on me, and tells me begone! I do try to be good, but it ain't a bit of use. All the world says I'm bad; and so I'll have to be, as long as I'm in it. And Pete Cooper says I'm bound to be hung. What *he* says must come true, for he is the seventh son, he tells everybody. Bound to be hung! The stars told him I was! If I am, it will be sure to be for somebody else. Lord, please save me! I don't mind dying for somebody else, but not that way. I've hardly slept an hour since he told me that; I'm thinking of it all the time. I wonder if God thinks I'm so bad? He knows I never did anybody any harm in my life; but never no good either, I s'pose. I dreamed last night that mother was calling me to come to her Oh, if I could only go! if I could only do a good turn for somebody, and then die!"

He was leaning against the iron railing, when the door

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of the great house opened, and a gentleman and lady came out and descended the steps. The gentleman's face was cold and stern, but his companion's gentle, sweet and beautiful. Dick noticed that, and started toward her to beg for work.

"Please, lady," he began, when the gentleman, raising his cane, exclaimed:

"Be off with you, you young vagabond!"

"Oh, my dear, don't speak so harshly. See how miserably he looks, poor boy!'

"Nonsense. He has a miserable *bad* look, I see. The young rascal is just loitering about, watching a chance to get in and steal something. Be off, before I call a policeman."

Dick drew off, frightened at the threat. The gentleman turned to give some directions to the workmen, and then the poor boy looked round. He wanted another glimpse of the gentle, sweet lady. She was looking at him—a sad, pitying expression was on her face. She caught his eye, and hastily opening her pocket-book, dropped close to the marble steps, unseen by any one but Dick, a note. He knew it was for him. A grateful look from him, a sweet acknowledging smile from her, and she passed from his sight.

Returning, our poor boy picked up the note—a large sum for him to own, one dollar—and started off; but came back again, to spell out the name on the door plate.

"I couldn't go without knowing her name. She'll be going from this world soon, I know. Angels don't live on earth. How I'd like to die for her! I don't mind what he said. I'm used to that kind of talk. He couldn't help it. There's something about me that makes 'em all talk so. But what *she* said makes me feel queer. A smile for Dick! a kind word! money! But what of that? Money I don't care for. But the look she give me! The first kind word

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since mother died I've got to-day. May be she'll think of me to-night, when she says her prayers."

He was walking along, thinking of the beautiful lady all the time, except now and then another thought would steal back to his mind, and a shiver through his veins, as he murmured:

"Oh no! Good Lord, save me from *that!* Any other way to die—"

"Dick! Dick Allen!" called near, aroused him from his reveries. Glancing round, he saw an old acquaintance, Bolting Bill, who said:

"Come along. You look tired and hungry. I've raised the wind, and am going to stand a treat."

Yielding, as ever, to a stronger will, Dick followed his companion to an eating-house, the resort of the very worst characters in town.

It was near dark when they reached their destination. Dick had been wandering about since early dawn, and was very tired. After eating his supper, he grew sleepy, and was nodding in his seat, when the proprietor of the place said:

"Go in there and take a nap," pointing to a little room close by.

Dick did as he was told. How long he had slept he knew not, when he was aroused by hearing his own name spoken. Peeping around, he saw the room had two other occupants—one a stranger to him; the other he knew well, and dreaded too, for several times Dick had narrowly escaped being inveigled by that man into very grave offences.

Then he heard them planning the robbery of a house, where they were sure of getting well paid for the risk they might run.

The boy's ears were strained to catch every word. A name was mentioned—one with which was associated all his

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thoughts of heaven. It was that which he had seen on the door where his angel lady lived.

"Can we depend on this boy?" was asked in a low, cautious voice.

"I'll make him afraid not to do as we wish. But we'll wake him, and sound him. Dick, up with you!"

Dick took considerable shaking before he did as they bade him. And then he listened to their plans and proposals to him.

Alas for all his thoughts of trying to be a good boy! Either through fear, or some other motive, he readily and willingly agreed. He was to go with them. They needed just such a wiry little elf to climb up and do as they would instruct him.

That night there had been a grand party at Mr. Clifton's. It was late before the guests had departed. The household were all completely tired out, and sank on their couches in heavy slumbers. It seemed to Mr. Clifton he had scarce closed his eyes, when he was aroused by the cry:

"Murder! Fire! Thieves!"

Ere he could spring from his bed the report of a pistol sounded through the hall. An instant after, a piercing cry—a child's voice—reached his ears. Bewildered and terrified, he caught up his dressing robe, turned on the gas, and ran out into the hall. All was still then, save low moans and difficult breathing in the lower hall. One and another terrified face appeared on the steps, and followed George Clifton as he descended and drew close to the form of a child lying on the velvet carpet, surrounded by a pool of blood.

As George Clifton gazed inquiringly on the little pale face, which seemed somewhat familiar to him, the boy whispered, in low, broken words:

"They didn't get—nothing. I hallooed—in time."

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"Oh, George, this is the boy you drove away this morning," said a low, frightened voice near by. And poor Dick raised his eyes to see his angel lady.

"Ha! Then it is as I suspected," said Mr. Clifton.

"No, no! I am—not so bad. Oh, please, lady—stop this bleeding—so I can tell you all," whispered Dick.

Quickly they summoned the physician, who lived across the street.

The doctor looked at the wounded boy, felt his pulse, and sadly shook his head. From his side the blood was flowing continually. But managing to staunch it for a while, he administered a cordial which seemed to strengthen the poor boy.

"Never mind, lady. Don't look sorry. I ain't— Please come close. I can't speak loud," Dick whispered.

And then, when all gathered near, stopping often to rest, and to receive a cordial from the doctor, he told his story—a pitiful story; one of gratitude, self-sacrifice, devotion, aye, to death even.

He had agreed to come with the robbers, that he might give the alarm, and save their property. That when the men had gotten into the house, lighted their dark lantern, and was about forcing the safe, where the silver and money were, he had put out the light quickly, and raised the cry that had aroused them; and for which he received the wound of which he was then dying. Tears were streaming from Mrs. Clifton's and others' eyes. Her husband was more agitated than any one had ever seen him before.

"Save him, doctor! save him! Oh, how I wronged you, poor child!" he said, in a voice trembling with emotion.

"Don't worry, sir. You couldn't help it. But please tell folks Dick wasn't so bad as all thought—when I'm gone, you know. I'm so glad if I have served you. Dick has done some good now, and he's glad to go to mother. So happy!

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Sweet lady, don't cry. It was your smile and kind word that saved me. Hold my hand. Is it dirty? No; how white and clean it is now! And see! My clothes are clean and nice! Oh, how dark it is now! Please light the gas? I hear mother calling—I'm coming. I see now. Oh, how beautiful you are, lady! Mother is holding a bright crown over your head. Up, up, please? lift me, please?"

She raised him gently. A bright, beautiful smile was over the poor pale face. His eyes closed; the blue lips quivered. "So glad, mother!" was scarcely breathed out, and his head fell back on the doctor's bosom, and poor Dick—devoted Dick—was freed from suffering, sorrow, and sin!

George Clifton had him laid among his kindred dead, and a little stone told the story of his devotion. The cold, suspicious nature of George Clifton has undergone a great change. Few harsh words, and frequent gentle ones, fall on the ears of the living when he is near them, for now he feels the power of a gentle word. "The good, the joy that may bring. Eternity shall tell."

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THE LOVER'S GHOST.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was a dismal night. The wind, moaning and sighing, swept through the tall poplars and round the great stone house, stealing in through crack and crevice, and "chilling to the very heart," notwithstanding the glowing fire in the grate, one of the inmates. So she said, as she drew closer around her the shawl, and sank further back in the comfortable arm-chair:

"Well, what is it, my dears? What for do you want your old nurse?"

"A story, nurse! Tell us a ghost story, please?" asked a pretty, bright girl, dropping on a stool at the feet of the venerable nurse.

"A ghost story! Well, something did happen sixty years ago. I will tell you about it. You may be able to explain it. You are wiser now than we were then."

"Tell us! O yes, tell us!" the merry maidens pleaded, drawing closer round the old woman.

"Here, in this house, I lived when it happened, near sixty years ago. I came here with your great-grandmother, my little Nellie. She was a bride then, and I her little maid. This house was filled with as merry a set of young folks as were ever gathered together. And the merriest of them all was Mirian Ashton.

"She was the life of all the wedding parties. At times now I think I can hear her merry, ringing voice sounding

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through these halls. She was beautiful, too; and, although I would not admit it then, was even more beautiful than my own dear lady.

"Lovers she had by the dozen; yet she laughed and made fun of them all, until young Archie Grafton came home from abroad. And when, like all the other young men about here, he grew to love her too, we all saw plainly how it was. She did not laugh at and make fun of him.

"We knew she was caught at last. And he was so different in his nature! She so gay, happy, thoughtless, and childlike; he grave, silent, watchful and dignified. I wondered how they could love each other!

"I remember once hearing her say she never had a sorrow in her life, and knew not what it was to feel sad. My lady said to me afterwards:

"'Trouble would go very hard with Mirian. She could not bear much. God grant she may never have to!'

"Mr. Grafton seemed to worship her. He would watch her every motion, and listen to her merry words spoken to others with a real jealous way. I think he could not bear to have her give a look or speak a word except to him.

"At times she would be very good, and only seem to care to be with him. And then again she would go back to her old ways, and be merry and happy with other young gentlemen. She would flirt a little, as you call it now, and he would chide and coax her afterward; and again she would try to please him, until it happened, one time, we had a dinner party. It was the last one of the season, and so a grand one it was. Many folks came down from the city and some of Miss Mirian's old beaux.

"I never saw her look so beautiful as she did then. She wore the dress she waited on my lady in—white—all white, and the satin covered with lace that my lady told me was a fortune of itself.

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"I can see her now, as she flitted about in this very room. Those doors were not here then all was one great drawing-room, they called it. And I almost think I can hear his deep, heavy breathing, as he gazed on her giving her bright, beautiful smiles and sweet words to others. He stood there, just at that corner of the mantel, when I came in to bring my lady's fan. They were dancing, and it was very warm in here, but bleak and cold enough outside.

"It grew late in the night; many of those who lived near had gone; others were seeking the rooms we had prepared for them, and I was waiting, just inside the library, with the wrapping of one of the ladies who was just bidding good-night to the guests still in this room.

"I heard some one coming, and stepped back a little. The door was pushed further open, thus hiding me, and Miss Mirian and Mr. Grafton came in.

"I do not know how it was I did not get out. I seemed bound in that spot. I did not mean to be an eavesdropper.

"They were talking when they entered; he in an angry voice. She said:

"'If you cannot trust me, I fear we would live a very miserable life. I do not wish your love if you have not perfect confidence in me.'

"'Why, then, do you give the smiles that should alone be mine to others? Why—'

"'Stop!' she said in a voice I had never heard from her before—'Stop! Remember, Mr. Grafton, I am not your slave yet, to do your bidding alone. I very much fear I should be, if I were your wife, which I never will be, unless I very much change my mind, and you your actions and nature too.'

"'Mirian, you never loved me. You have been trifling with me, as with the others; and, as heaven hears me, you shall not have a chance to change your mind. I will go

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and leave you to carry on your game of heart-breaking,' he said, in such a bitter voice as I never heard.

"'Go, then! 'tis better so. Good-night, Mr. Grafton,' she answered; and he said:

"'Good-bye, you may add, and for ever. I will trouble you no more, Miss Ashton!'

"She smiled, as much as to say, 'You will be back again to-morrow,' and walked out, leaving him in the library. Another moment, and he followed, and I escaped then, and heard him ordering his horse a moment later.

"He only lived about a mile up the road. You know the 'Old Hall?' That was his home.

"That word, '*forever!*' kept ringing in my ear. Although I knew it was only a lovers' quarrel, and thought he would either be back again in the morning, or she would write him a note in the afternoon, I felt really so sorry for him, going off so unhappy! But I knew he was as much, may be more, in fault than she was. But it was such a bleak night, so icy and slippery, I wished he had stayed with us, as he often did.

"I left Miss Mirian in the drawing-room, and went up stairs to attend some of our guests. A very short time, not more than a half hour, I think, could have passed, when I heard a loud ring at the hall door. A few moments after, a scream from my lady caused me to fly almost to her; but I had only reached the stairs when another cry, a heart-rending wail, seemed sounded through these halls.

"Terrified, I sprang down the stairs just as some men were bearing into this room the form of one that it needed only another glance to tell whom.

"They laid him on a couch, just there, between those great windows. The man whom only a little while before had left us, full of health and strength, was there lying pale and lifeless.

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"Yes, yes, his good-bye was 'for ever.' Archie Grafton was dead. Thrown from his horse, his head striking against a large rock on the side of the road, a great gaping wound on his broad, handsome forehead, told us that. Mr. Ashton caught his sister in his arms, and strove to take her from the dreadful sight; but with another wild cry and a bound, she fled from him, and again sank down beside her dead lover, pillowing his head on her breast.

"Oh, I think I can see her now. The great stains of blood all over her beautiful dress.

"Well, well; it was long before they could get her away; and when they did, they soon knew her mind was wandering. Aye, yes, I think with that first cry that escaped her lips, her reason was gone.

"After weeks of illness she recovered some strength, and moved about again among us; but, oh, the saddest face that ever was seen was hers then. No one would have known her.

"Sighing all the time; weeping so much; never speaking except to answer, and then most always her reply would be the same to every question, 'Gone for ever!'

"Yes, she was 'melancholy mad,' they all said. Now here comes the strange part of my story. She was sitting looking out of the window one day, I watching her. It was twilight. All of a sudden she started up. Her eyes grew bright; a beautiful smile was over her whole face; she looked like herself; and, waving her hands out of the window, she said:

"'I am coming, Archie; wait a moment.' Out of the room she ran, through the hall, and out on the lawn. I followed to the door.

"I saw her put forth her arms, as if to welcome some one; and then, to save me, I could not follow any nearer her, nor

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raise my eyes even. I was possessed with a sort of awe, or terror; I don't know what it was.

"She walked up and down under the trees, so some of the servants said, and declared, too, they saw a gentleman with her. Others said it was her own shadow. Perhaps I might have seen and known if I could have looked; but I did not dare.

"I heard her talking softly, lovingly to herself, or some one else. She came in, saying, 'Good night, love,' and looked gentle, happy. From that night she was no longer sad; but every evening, just at twilight, she would go out and seem to welcome some one; and always I would grow so frightened, or get possessed of that strange feeling, that I dared not raise my eyes.

"One afternoon it was raining, and she sat watching at the window. She turned to me and said:

"'I don't think Mr. Grafton will come this evening; he will not wish me to walk in the rain. But perhaps he will want to come and sit with me in here. Mary Leonard, I do not want him to come in, because, if he does, he will surely coax me away, and I am not just ready yet. Now be bright looking out, and if you see him let me know, and I will run out for a moment. Get my shawl.'

"No one would have dreamed her crazy, if they did not know. Mr. Archie was dead, and could not come. I got the shawl, and in a few moments after she said:

"'Here he comes! Dear Archie! He could not stay away!'

"She ran out, but only staid a little while, and came back, smiling softly, and singing a little love-song she used to sing before her sorrow came. But as her mind grew more cheerful her strength was daily growing less. She failed quite fast; and from being as round, plump and rosy

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as you, my little Nellie, she grew like a shadow, so thin and white.

"We all knew she was not long for this world. The doctor told my lady she was fading away. Before the roses of summer had ceased to bloom she would be with the flowers, blooming in a better land. Often she would say:

"'Mary Leonard, mind, you must not let Archie come in until I tell you.'

"Every evening, in the twilight, she would walk under those great poplars, and murmur in a soft voice to some one even until the evening before she died. Ah! my dears, I can't tell what it was, *his ghost*, or *her imagination!* I only know she was comforted and made happy. And I was awed into such a state that I could not use my eyes to see if there was anything to see.

"The last evening, just before that hour she always went to walk, she called me and said:

"'Mary Leonard, Archie may come in *now*. I cannot walk to meet him, I am so tired. I will go with him; I am ready now.'

"Twilight came. She looked eagerly out. The glad look came again in her eyes, and she attempted to raise herself, and then sunk back into her easy-chair.

"'He is at the door, Mary; let him in,' she said.

"I glanced at her. She was so white and strange looking! I tried to run or call for help. But no; that same old feeling was on me.

"Down went my eyes to the floor, and stayed there. I heard her say:

"'I am waiting and ready, love! Take me, Archie! I am yours!'

"Then her voice sank so low I could only catch the words, 'No more—forever,' and 'parting.' Then a soft lingering sigh, and all grew so still. And with a great

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effort I broke from the spell that held me, and screamed out in my terror; for there, her head drooping on her breast, her hands fallen powerless beside her, was Miss Mirian—dead, dead, dead! I ought not to say *dead*, but sleeping, children, the long, blessed sleep! Freed from her sorrow! She had sought the land where clouds never gather over mind, heart, or eye. She knows all things now. She thought he came for her! I sometimes used to think, may be he did. Ah! dear! I can't tell what it was. But there are wiser folks about now. They can tell, or think they can. I hear them reading of such things, and they seem to understand them. It will not be long before I shall be wiser too, my dears. But that will be when I am with those who have gone before me—up where God gives light to all."

The old nurse ceased. The girls gazed, not affrighted, but with looks of deeper interest, around that room, and thinking of those who had lived, loved and suffered there. They murmured:

"Strange! strange!"

And then Nellie said, softly:

"But it is sweet and comforting to think that we may be permitted to imagine, if nothing more, that some loved one comes to travel with us through that 'valley of shadows. Thank you, nurse, for your story, which, although so strange, is one that has done me good, and has a lesson for us all. We will never part in anger with those we love, for fear it may be 'for ever"

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HIRAM HELPER'S FAITH.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Is thy cruse of comfort failing? rise and share it with another;
And through all the years of famine, it shall serve thee and thy brother!
Love divine will fill thy storehouse, or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fair for one will often make a royal feast for two."

HIRAM HELPER had a secret, the first he had ever kept from his wife during the sixteen years that they had shared each other's joys and sorrows. It pressed heavily on Hiram's heart, which, aching with its burden, longed for relief. In vain he watched his wife's countenance for some sign which told of a favorable time for his speaking, and being at peace.

At length he determined to have an end to the miserable state he was in. He would tell all, and have his heart easy on one subject, if it ached worse about another. Yes, he would deceive Hester no longer, even if he should, as he was almost sure he would, never hear the last of it.

Deeply was Hiram thinking over his secret, and considering the consequence of his divulging it. At the same time his Hester was considering how she should manage to help Hiram a little. She knew he was worrying over the failure of his crop, and likely enough his old folks, father or mother, wanted a little help. And then there was Maggie, just getting to the age that girls want to be fixing up a little. A silk gown, that had been promised for two years, was wanted then, for Kitty Marshall's wedding and the parties after.

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Maggie was to be bride-maid, and of course would want other things too. Now the unsuspecting wife thought that the combination of difficulties was the cause of the anxious look on Hiram's face. Yes, she would try and help him.

"Hiram?" she said.

"Well, Hester."

"That young fellow from town has been here again to-day, looking after butter. He says he would like to engage about twenty-five pounds a week from us; he was so much pleased with the little I sold him when he was here last. I wish we could let him have that much. I could, if we had four cows instead of two."

A real terrified expression came into Hiram's eyes, and he said:

"Oh, don't think of it!"

"But I will. I know, Hiram, how you feel. You have not the means to buy two more cows just now, and you don't feel like using any of that you laid by for Maggie. That's it—hey?"

A groan from Hiram was the only response.

"Ah! I thought so! Now I'll tell you. We will take one hundred dollars, and buy those cows that Dixon has for sale, and in four months I can put it back, and afterwards add much to that, and help you too. What say you?"

"Can't do it, Hester! Indeed I can't!" answered Hiram, in a voice filled with regret.

"Can't! Why not?" asked Hester.

"Because—Hester—because I can't!"

"Because you can't, Hiram Helper? I thought that was only a woman's reason. Now please to tell me *why* you can't?"

"I — I—Well, Hester, I can't—because—well—because the money is gone."

"Money gone!"

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"Gone."

"Where gone?"

"I lent it to Richard Weston," answered poor Hiram, not daring to raise his eyes to his wife's.

"Oh! I know now. *You* was the *kind friend* that set him up again, hey! Oh, Hiram Helper! you have been hearing me wonder who could have been such a fool as to set Dick Weston up again, for two months past, and never once let on it was you. You want a keeper, Hiram Helper Indeed you do! You, you—yes, you are a lunatic, or worse! Taking bread out of your child's mouth to give to others! Oh! I declare I shall go crazy myself! Set Dick Weston up again!"

"Hester, dear Hester, please don't grieve so. It will be all right; I know it will!"

"Not on this earth!" groaned Hester.

"Yes, here, Hester. He will pay me back in six months, he says."

"And you believe him?" sneered Hester.

"Yes, I do, Hester. And, Hester, I feel sure Maggie will not suffer for it. I am sure God will provide for her. Can't you trust Him?"

"Hiram Helper, don't talk so to me! I can't trust *you* any more. And I don't trust in Dick Weston's ever paying back Maggie's money. Oh! I shall go crazy, or you will send us all to the alms-house, I know!"

"Hester, you will never suffer for anything while I live. And that money I intended for Maggie, because I have lent it to a poor fellow for a little while, I don't see that there is any great harm done! I am certain God will fix it all right."

"I believe that myself. But it will be in the next world."

"And here too, Hester; when it is most needed, perhaps.

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You see, when I saw that young wife of Weston's looking so sorrowful, with her poor little sick baby in her arms, I felt so much for her—so far from all her friends, among strangers too! Then I thought, who knows but some day our Maggie might be just so, in trouble, too, far away from us? And so I thought I would give him a lift. I knew you would not suffer while I had strength, and I did not know how soon that poor young creature might. So now you know just how I came to do it."

"Yes; and I know too, that this town holds the greatest—if it was any other woman's husband, I should say the greatest fool in the world. But as it is, I shall have to say, I suppose, the—"

"Dearest, best, and kindest husband and father, the truest friend, and, more than all, the most faithful, trusting Christian that the world holds," said a young girl who entered the room just then, and throwing her arms around her father's neck, uttered these words in a deep and earnest tone.

"Just alike! A pair of them! Both crazy, I believe," groaned Hester.

"Don't worry, mother, dear. And, father, if Mr. Weston never pays, I shall not feel bad, and will think all will be right, in God's good time," said Maggie.

"You are a good girl, Maggie. Thank you, my daughter for your sympathy. Come, mother, don't worry. Be friends."

"Yes, do," said Maggie, encircling both parents in one loving caress.

Time wore on, months into years, and Richard Weston was no more successful on Hiram Helper's money than he had been with his own. Things grew worse with him, and at length he left the town to go far away. And Hiram had only the young wife's deep thanks, in return for the money lent.

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"Lost, as I knew it was," said Hester.

"May be not. And if it is, I would sooner it should be so than to see that poor thing so miserable. If she is with her friends and comfortable, I am satisfied," said Hiram, who, after having the weight of the secret removed, and having Maggie's approval also, felt very easy, and expressed himself so, without much fear of the consequences.

Despite Hester's predictions of a final bringing up of the family to the alms-house, Hiram managed to get on very comfortably. After a while the cows were purchased, and a little later the two hundred and fifty dollars put away again for Maggie, and more and more added. The little household continued to prosper, and after a time the kindly action which had caused Hiram so much uneasiness was almost forgotten and quite forgiven by his wife. She had, at length, learned to place perfect confidence in Hiram's doing just what was right.

Five years after the night we first heard Maggie's loving, comforting words, she left her father's home, and went to make happy another's. Yes, Maggie was married, and Hiram gave his darling girl, one thousand dollars to begin housekeeping with.

"There, child, that is yours; and there is a little more that may come some time, perhaps. If not, we will consider it invested in the Bank of Heaven, won't we?"

"Yes, indeed, father. And I shall thank you for it," answered Maggie.

Months passed on, and the mother's ever watchful eye and anxious heart detected in her child's letters a tone of half-hidden sorrow. Maggie's happiness was short-lived, but her father was spared the pain that knowledge would have caused him.

Mercifully and lovingly God took the good man to himself. Quietly, quickly, spared from lingering sickness and

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suffering he passed away. After the evening prayer his low Amen was heard for the last time on earth.

"Hiram! why, are you asleep?" asked his wife.

Then she noticed he still remained kneeling. In vain she tried to awaken him. Hester knew, then, he was sleeping the last blessed sleep of such as loved both God and his fellow-man.

After a little while the widowed mother sought her child, and then found the cause of Maggie's sorrow.

The man to whom she had intrusted her child was very fond of the wine cup. Carefully he had concealed this vice from the parents, and until months after the marriage Maggie knew not how fatal was becoming that insatiate thirst.

Remaining with, to comfort and sustain her child, the mother saw one after another possession sacrificed by the reckless man until all of his own was gone. Still Maggie clung to him, until all of her father's savings were gone too. And in five more years, Hester and her child were penniless.

This poverty was doubly severe then, for little children looked eagerly into the mother's face, and called for bread.

"Give us this day our daily bread," prayed the infant Hiram, in his sweet, lisping tones. And in an agony of sorrow and doubt the mother groaned forth:

"But the morrow! Oh! the morrow!"

And the blessed little comforter, looking up into her troubled face, hesitated a moment, and then, with a glad look, said:

"I'll ask again to-morrow, mamma. And God will give me plenty, mamma, plenty—all we want."

Confidently the child trusted God. Must not she? thought the miserable mother.

Hester could sustain or comfort her daughter no more. She despaired of any relief, and her old fear of the alms house seemed very near a realization.

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"Oh! child, if we only had that money your father just as good as threw away, how it would help you now! It is a wonder his soft heart was not the ruin of him."

"Dear mother, don't think of that. How glad I am father did that kind action! *That* is the only part of his money I consider *well spent*. If he had not have *saved* that, it would have gone with all the rest!" answered Maggie.

Well might the poor mother say, "Oh! the morrow;" for then the last, the worst of their sorrow would be on them."

Their home, Hiram's home, to which the loving Hester had carried her child and grandchildren, was to be sold by the creditors. Yes, on the morrow they would be homeless.

But before the coming of the morrow, the sorrow-laden woman had another trial to bear. Reeling, staggering up the walk, came the author of all her misery, and sank on the threshold, dying almost—not then in intoxication, but weak and ill from exposure and continual intemperance.

Gently she drew him in, and with patient hand and forgiving heart, again ministered to him. The next day was the darkest of Maggie's life.

The hour for the sale was nearing swiftly. The red flag was placed on the little porch, and the infant Hiram, amused by the bright color playing in the wind, clapped his tiny hands and wondered why his mother was so sad.

"Come see, mamma!" he would call; and then again meeting her sorrowful look, he would say, "Plenty bread, mamma! Plenty bread, to-day, too!"

A louder, merrier shout from her boy caused Maggie to approach a window and look out, as a buggy drew up to the door, in which were two gentlemen, one of whom, jumping out, walked up, and removing the flag, rolled it up, tossed it to the other, who drove off, leaving his companion, who returned to the door and knocked.

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When Maggie admitted her visitor, she immediately recognized the village postmaster, an old friend of her father's.

"My dear child, let me relieve your mind right off. Your home will not be sold to-day—nor ever, I trust."

"Not sold?" repeated Maggie, who gazed bewildered into her friend's face, and could not understand what joy was coming to her.

"No, my child! It is still yours." And then he told her that, a few weeks before, he had received a letter from Dick Weston's widow, inquiring about Hiram Helper and his family, and that he had written immediately and informed her of Hiram's death, and his widow and child's great need, and had stated in a second letter the fact of their home being about to be sacrificed. Only that morning he had received a reply, inclosing a check for the money loaned by Hiram to Dick Weston so many years before, with an increase sufficient to enable him to assure the most pressing creditor that his claim would be satisfied that day. So it was that he had sent off the auctioneer, with the sign of the sale.

"God is good," murmured the thankful woman.

Opening a door of the adjoining room, she called:

"Mother!"

Hester came forth, with a look of deep dejection on her face, but noticing directly the hopeful light in Maggie's eye, she asked eagerly:

"What is it, child? You have good news!"

"Yes, oh, yes, mother!" And then Maggie read to her a letter which the good postmaster had brought her, from Mrs. Weston. It was directed to "The Widow and Daughter of Hiram Helper."

The writer expressed her sympathy for their sorrow, and alluded to her own at the time that Hiram's kind heart felt for her, and in her great need his hand alone, of the many

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they called friends, was stretched forth to help them. "God bless his loved ones!" she wrote. "I know he is reaping now his reward."

"My dear, good father!" He said, "God will fix it all right." And has he not done so, mother?" asked Maggie.

"Dear Hiram! Yes, yes, he was always right, although I sometimes feared his soft heart would be the ruin of us."

"No, no, mother! That kind heart's actions have saved and blessed us!" returned Maggie, in a tone filled with deep thankfulness.

"Just then, little Hiram ran in, and seeing the happy change on his mother's face, clapped his tiny hands, and said:

"God did give us plenty of bread to-day, mamma. Hiram said He would; all we want, too!"

The mother pressed closely to her bosom the little namesake of her father, and prayed that the loving nature and trusting faith of that good man might grow and wax strong in her boy's heart, and that in all things he might be like him.

Again Maggie grew hopeful, and in time happy once more. Friends came forward, that the kind postmaster had managed to awaken to their Christian duty; and when God raised Maggie's husband from his bed of illness, his fellowmen helped him to rise again to a position of respect, and the confidence of all who knew him.

Hester lived long to enjoy the return of comfort and happiness to those she loved; and often she is heard to say:

"Hiram was always right, and most particularly when he helped Dick Weston. He said he would consider it invested in the 'Bank of Heaven.' And now I know it must have been; and God gave it to us, in His own good time—our hour of greatest need!"

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RICHER THAN HE THOUGHT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEM.

Money makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
All the rest is but leather and prunella.
—New Readers.

"I say, Edith, about this young Gladman!"

"Well, father dear, what about him?" said Edith Bellemore, while a tell-tale blush mantled her fair brow.

"What of him? Why, his visits here are quite too frequent."

"Not more so than many others, father. There is his friend Mr. Wheat, for instance."

"Quite a different person. The case is just this: I have noticed that young Gladman is very attentive, and I fear you receive him rather more favorably than any other. Now you must put a stop to this. Discourage him. I mean, give him to understand his suit—ahem—well—in a word, you won't have him."

"Why, father, how can I do that, when he has never asked me?"

"Nonsense! You girls know well enough how to give a fellow the cold shoulder, so as he *never shall* ask you. You know what I mean. Young Gladman is a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow. Never will be worth a dollar ahead. Not for a moment to be thought of as a proper suitor for you. Society expects and demands a brilliant match for my

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daughter. This young man will do well enough in his place among people of little or no means I must do him justice, and say he is a man of very fair moral character, that is all."

"Of fair moral character! A possession which should be held of far higher worth than gold, and is valued as such by all true women."

"Sentimental nonsense! You understand me, Edith. You have always been a dutiful, obedient child, and I trust will remain so. I do not wish to treat the young man rudely, nor would have you; only let him understand his case is hopeless. And I say, Edith, there is his friend Mr. Wheat, a fine, noble fellow; you ought to show him some little attention. His position—his wealth demand as much."

"Very well, sir," answered Edith, and as the door closed after her father, added, "for his worth in my eye consists of his kindness to and appreciation of his friend. Oh dear! why was I cursed with wealth? I wish I was poor, that I might be made rich in the possession of Edgar Gladman's heart. Yes, I know he loves me, and it is because of these hated hoards of gold that he does not speak."

As the only child of parents immensely wealthy, Edith's prospects were brilliant. Added to this, she was the sole heiress of an old bachelor uncle, who, dying a few years previous, left her in the immediate possession of a hundred thousand dollars. For many months Edith had felt what a deep impression Edgar Gladman was making on her heart. Yet she knew there was an insurmountable barrier between them—her father's unbending will. He would never consent to her union with other than one of equal wealth or exalted position, and poor Gladman had neither.

"What on earth is the matter, Gladman? Why, man, your looks sadly belie your name. You are the *sorriest*, most miserable looking fellow I've seen for a long while! What's the trouble? Lost the —— case?"

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"No, thank Heaven! that went all right. The poor fellow is acquitted. I ought to feel cheerful for this success."

"Yes, if it only was a *paying* case. Somehow or other you manage to get hold of all the most desperate cases, and those that pay nothing. You ought to have been rich by this time, having been so successful."

"Some one must take such cases. And I am only a follower of yours; we divide, if I mistake not."

"Oh, the thunder! I forgot that. But I can afford it, Ned; you cannot. However, to return to my question: What troubles you?"

"Nothing more than usual. You know how deeply, how hopelessly, I love Miss Bellemore!"

"Well, have you told her, and has she refused you?"

"No, no, I shall never tell her; although I sometimes fancy her a little kinder to me than others. But her father's manner tells me too plainly how absurd it is for me to think of her. What have I to offer to such as Edith Bellemore? Honor forbids me to speak!"

"Oh, fly away with your honor! You can offer her more than gold—a true, pure heart! an honorable name! And now, Ned, take courage. I know she loves you. And I might as well make a clean breast of it. I have thought a great deal of her myself, and if I had not seen very clearly she had no love for me, why, I should have placed my hand and heart before her long ago. She is a lovely girl, and you have my best wishes for your success. I was just coming to your room to ask a favor."

"From me? It is granted before asked."

"Thank you; then I will go directly and order your baggage removed to my rooms. For you are to be with me in the future."

"Stop, my friend! this cannot be. I cannot afford such a style of living. Impossible!"

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"You cannot retract; your word is given! It shall cost you no more. You can direct the establishment, and live as economical as you choose. I am awful lonesome since my cousin finished his studies and left for his home; and if you do not have mercy on, and come take care of me, I shall do something desperate."

"Well, be it as you wish."

A few weeks after the above conversation, Sam Wheat was sitting in his luxurious apartment, waiting the return of his friend. At last he came in hurriedly, and going up, placed his arm around young Wheat, saying:

"I am very late, my dear fellow; and now I come with news which I fear will distress you. I am going to leave you, and have only time now to say good-bye."

"Leave me! Where are you going?"

"You know there has been a call for more troops. The —— regiment leaves for the front to-night, and I go with them as a private. If I live long enough, I shall rise—"

"Are you crazy? Oh, my dear fellow, there is no need of your going. Indeed, I cannot spare you! Stay here; I will put in *two* substitutes before they leave to-night."

"No, no, my friend; I must go. I am not crazy now, but may be if I remain longer. I can be better spared than most men. There are none to mourn if I fall. Sam, my good fellow, give an ear to my clients. And one thing more —you will see *her*. Bid her good-bye for me, and just say I could not come to say it. That will be the simple truth. I dare not trust myself. And should I fall—then tell her with my last breath came thoughts of her."

"I shall tell her too, that it was more for love of Edith Bellemore than love of country that made you go and fix yourself as a target for the enemy's shots."

Frequently Sam. Wheat visited Mr. Bellemore's, and managed each time to get from Edith some little message,

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some word which whispered hope to the soldier's lonely heart.

Accounts of young Gladman's bravery and swiftly rising career often reached his friend; and before six months had passed, he had reached the command of his company.

Regularly were these good tidings conveyed to Edith's ear by the devoted friend. One day, on his return from one of these visits, he found seated in his office, waiting him, one of the assessors of the internal revenue.

Mr. Wheat's returns were soon made, his income tax fixed, and the assessor about leaving, when he stopped, thought a moment, and then asked, "Have you not a friend here with you, a young lawyer?"

Sam was about to tell him where his friend was then, and what doing, and add, that men who were periling their lives for their country were not taxed. But a bright thought entered his brain. He dearly loved a good joke, and now there was a capital chance for real fun. He could not resist, and in fact he was quite willing to pay a good round sum for the pleasure of a hearty laugh. So he answered:

"Yes, certainly, my friend Gladman. But he is not in the city just now."

"Can you tell where I could hear from him?"

"Couldn't possibly say where he is now. He is traveling for pleasure. But I *can* tell you all about his worth. No one knows that better than I."

"Well, if you will, thank you. His income is quite small, I believe."

"Ha! ha! ha! So, many others believe. Gladman is worth more than any man I know. Just take a seat, while I look over some papers. I am his representative, agent, or anything you may call me. He is an odd fellow—keeps his affairs very much to himself."

Sam took out his pencil, looked over sundry papers, made

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numberless figures, and then, calling to the assessor, pointed to the amounts.

"No! Impossible! Why, I had no idea of this. Why, he is almost a millionaire!"

"That is so—if those figures tell the truth," answered Sam.

"No doubt about the figures! You will swear to this?"

"Oh! thunder! I am a member of the church, and opposed to all swearing. Why, man, I told you I could not swear to my own. I can do as I did then—swear it is no *more* than that."

"That will be sufficient," answered the assessor.

"And now, if you can give me the receipts, I would like to pay both taxes, for I am going to leave the city myself for a while, and should like to settle this business," continued Sam.

The officer's surprise was immense. But there could be no doubt of the truth, he thought, and remarked, when leaving:

"When this report is published, it will surprise many, I imagine."

"Well, I guess it will. It is rather hard, too, that a fellow cannot be allowed to keep his own secrets," returned Sam. And then, when the door closed, Sam could hold in not a second longer, but burst forth into such a peal of merriment. He chuckled and rubbed his hands, then roared in laughter, and held his sides; and finally fell exhausted on the carpet, just as his old servant entered the room.

This man had been with young Wheat for many years, and really loved his young master. He gazed on the form lying before him. His face grew very sad. He shook his gray head ominously, and then went up, lifted Sam very gently, and placed him on the lounge, went and dipped a towel in ice water, and placed it on his head—all the time

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his face growing sadder. Sam read his servant's thoughts, knew his misgivings, and was about to reassure him as to his condition. When he opened his mouth to speak, with the first word came forth a distinct, unmistakable hiccough!

"Proof positive, against all words to the contrary!" said Sam to himself. And then his mirth burst forth again.

The old servant returned to the kitchen and reported to Betty that "for the first time, since he had known Mr. Wheat, he had found him very much under the influence of liquor, and in a very bad way."

He soon returned with Betty, wheeled the lounge into the adjoining bedroom, drew off his master's boots, undressed and placed him in bed. A little while after, he came in with a hot mustard bath—put Sam's feet in, regardless of all resistance, and finally absolutely forced him to swallow a pint of scalding hot coffee, without cream or sugar. The old man nodded to Betty, and whispered, confidently, "That will bring him round all right."

Morning dawned. Sam's merriment was reduced to controlment, and the faithful servant's mind made easy.

The next thought with Sam was, how to get Gladman home. In less than a month the report would be published, and then—

"Oh, Sam, my boy, you shall have rare fun! How old Bellemore will wheel round and change his tactics! Oh, there is a jolly time coming," he said.

But Sam's merriment received a sudden check. News reached him of another terrible battle, in which Gladman's regiment suffered severely.

The next day there came a list of the killed and wounded. Among the latter was the name of Capt. Gladman as very dangerously wounded. A few hours later, and Sam was *en route* for Washington, to find, and, if possible, to bring home his friend.

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Mr. Bellemore sat leisurely sipping his coffee and reading the morning news. Suddenly the paper was dashed aside, his hand brought down upon the table with a force which made all the elegant china shake and tremble, accompanied by the words:

"Dolt! Fool! Idiot! Just as blind as a bat!"

"To whom are you applying those flattering epithets, father?" asked Edith.

"To myself! Any child of seven years might have had more sense! A man of such elegant address, such rare refinement! I might have known that only the possessor of a large fortune could have his attainments. His whole bearing is princely! His were the eccentricities of wealth. His always taking the poor, non-paying clients might have opened my eyes. He wanted to be appreciated for *himself* alone. I understand now. I am sorry to have to admit that he was treated very shabbily by some of my family. I always thought he was a man far above most of the men who visited here."

"Who are you speaking of, Mr. Bellemore?" asked his wife.

"Why, young Gladman!"

"Father, did you not tell me I must—"

"*No*, Miss. Yes, Miss. I mean, I *did* tell you, you must not treat him rudely. You *know* I did!"

"Is he not the young person that you said would be very good food for powder?" asked his wife.

"No, Madam! I am speaking of Captain Gladman, a man of great patriotism and immense wealth! *You* refer to a very different person, I presume! Look there! And seizing up the paper, he pointed to the Revenue report.

"Almost a millionaire! A noble fellow! Such bravery too. I shall call on him just as soon as he gets home, to express my appreciation of his services in behalf of his country."

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"He returned yesterday, father. So Mr. Wheat told me last night," said Edith.

"Indeed! Then I shall order the carriage and call this morning. And I think, Edith, if you have any patriotism you will accompany me. We should show him that his countrymen and women too appreciate him! I shall be ready in an hour."

Edith was glad enough to have the permission to go. And while her father was directing the removal from the carriage of some rare old wines, she found opportunity to bend over the wounded man and whisper earnestly:

"Thank God for giving you back to us again. We will soon have you well and strong."

Mr. Bellemore's kindness was really oppressive. Sam Wheat's eyes danced merrily. Every now and then he would be seized with a violent fit of coughing—a ruse to hide his explosion of mirth.

"What is the matter, Sam; what are you laughing about?" asked his friend after the guests were gone."

"Oh, Ned, my boy, it is such fun to see old Bellemore doing the patriotic! Ha! ha! ha!"

"I fear I've done him injustice. I thought he had no thought except for gold and gain! Indeed, it is worth while getting wounded to find out the value of your friends," said Gladman.

"Oh, yes; certainly!" and Sam's mirth exploded again. "You see, my dear boy, how these kind mammas appreciate your services too. Look at all these beautiful flowers, dainty jellies, rare wines, sweet rose-tinted, kind, appreciative little notes! I believe I'll go get a slight wound myself. You see, these dear women can't fight *themselves*, so they make much of the boys that can fight for them! ***May be*** that is so; and *may be* they think they have just found out your ***real*** worth!"

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"Well, I had no idea that my poor services would be thought so much of. It does a soldier good to see so much patriotic feeling in his native city," said the unconscious young man.

Sam broke out again. This time his laughter was quite alarming, and Gladman murmured something about being "possessed of a laughing devil," he feared.

Kind treatment, hope continually whispering promises of love, soon wrought wonders for Edgar Gladman's restoration to health and strength.

Mr. Bellemore smoothing the path and inviting him on, and Sam Wheat constantly urging him forward, there was no resisting. And before he well knew how it all happened, he was engaged to Edith Bellmore; and before his three months' leave of absence had expired, Edith was all his own.

On the return of the happy couple from their wedding tour, Mr. Bellemore ventured to suggest the propriety of Capt. Gladman resigning his command. During the conversation the truth all came out. His supposed immense wealth! The scales dropped from his eyes. The *why* he was so *kindly* treated; Sam Wheat's constant merriment—all, all was plain enough now! Mr. Bellemore was far too shrewd a man to acknowledge to his son-in-law, or the world, that he was caught in his own trap. Yet he was caught decidedly, he felt too well, so determined to make "the virtue of necessity," and bear his disappointment as gracefully as possible. Gladman hastened to Sam to demand an explanation, in the midst of which they were interrupted by a light knock and Edith's voice, asking:

"May I come in? Mr. Wheat, I have a double object in this visit: first to find that truant, and then to thank you from my inmost heart for your aid in securing me the great happiness I am now blest with. From what I sur-

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mise, without your assistance I should not be near so rich to-day."

"Rich! Oh, Edith, to think I won you under false pretences! Sam, was this wise?"

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Wheat, *very* wise. Others thought they had just found out his true value—you and I *knew* it long ago. Oh, of far more worth than *gold* is the love of a true, honest heart," said Edith, earnestly.

"Sam, *how* came you to do it?"

"Why, that persistent assessor seemed so very anxious, I thought that likely enough Uncle Sam needed all the help he could get; so—well, I thought that the best way to make that respected relative a present in a delicate manner, and not wound his very sensitive nature, was *just the way I did*," said Sam, with a droll expression on his fine face.

"Oh, Sam, you are a sly scamp!"

"Oh, Sam, you are a true friend, a dear, good man, and I just wish I had a sister to give you," said Edith.

"Sam, I think Edith and I have both come to the same conclusion, and that is just this: there never was as good *wheat* raised as *our Wheat*, so entirely free from all *chaff!*"

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THE NEW MOTHER.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Ah! they loved her soon. The little one
Crept into her arms as to a nest.
Willie's always with her now, and May
Growing nearer to her every day."

THERE was unusual stir among the servants of "Lindley Grange." The windows of the great house were all open, and through them could be seen busy hands festooning garlands on the walls and over the paintings, while rare exotics were arranged in the antique vases.

Many months had passed since "The Grange" had been decorated with flowers. The last time it was with flowers all pale, none of brilliant hue, for she that had been once the brighest flower blooming there, lay faded, cold and dead. Twelve months had passed, and the tiny forms had ever since been decked with some badge telling of their loss. The motherless ones were that day to cast aside their garb of sorrow. Yes, a new mother was coming, and no reminder of the past must cloud her joy.

Nurse Cummings was gazing with a frowning brow on the great preparations going on. Closer to her fond heart she clasped the babe, and drew little Willie from the drawing-room door, into which he was peeping with wondering eyes, back into a cozy, beautiful room beyond—into "mamma's own room." And there the devoted woman stood with her nursling before the pictured face of her whose vacant place was that day to be filled by another. That sacred

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room was already occupied by another one, a child whose heart needed no tutoring. May had thrown herself on the sofa, her sweet face hidden amid the cushions, as if she wanted to shut out from eye and ear the sight and sounds of merry-making. She was old enough to feel all that Nurse Cummings would fain have taught the younger ones. Springing up, she stood with them before their mother's portrait, and with her little hands folded over her almost bursting heart, she sobbed forth:

"Though your place in papa's heart and home be given to another, dear mamma, your children will never *never*, let any other make them feel your loss the less, and never fill your place in their hearts."

"My own darling! Thank Heaven you are so like your dear mamma. He cannot forget her while you are by. But come, dry your tears, my precious. I would have you look as pretty as can be, and that will remind him, even at his new wife's side, of her whose beauty none could surpass. If this one is good and gentle, she will remind him of one that was better, aye, than the best that can live. And if she is proud, and has a will of her own, O then he will ever be thinking of the one that only knew the pride of being his! We will not sorrow, my May! Mamma cannot be forgotten, even by him."

"Nurse, nurse, where are your children? Come! tie on their ribbons; you have no time to lose. Their papa and—" The word was unsaid. Even the merry tongue of the housemaid could not give *that* name to another, a stranger. "The company will be here in fifteen minutes."

But that was time sufficient to smooth Willie's raven hair, catch back the goldens curls that fell over May's broad, white brow, wipe the traces of tears from the blue eyes, and tie on the bright ribbons.

The children were ready. In another moment the roll of the chaise was heard approaching the house.

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The servants gathered round, all anxious to catch a glimpse of the new mistress—to welcome her, the master thought—to decide if she was worthy to fill the place of one to whose memory they were all devoted.

All stood smiling but Nurse Cummings: she remained in the drawing-room with her little ones.

May sprang forward to throw her arms around her father, who, hastily kissing her, still clasping her with one arm, drew her forward and said:

"Welcome your mother, my daughter."

The arms that had been raised to clasp him were powerless then. Pale and trembling she stood, and if any sound had escaped her lips, it would have been the cry:

"No, no: not *my* mother!"

"Dear May," whispered a voice clear and sweet, and the child was pressed to the bosom of the new mother before the frown that was gathering had settled on the father's brow.

"Papa! papa!" cried out Willie, and the handsome five years old boy was caught to the father's heart. Then turning with him, he said:

"Kiss mamma, Willie."

But ere the words had left his lips, Willie lisped:

"I can't kiss mamma. She is dead. I've got no mamma now."

An angry flush mantled George Lindley's brow, and he looked sternly towards the nurse. But a gentle touch was on his arm, and a gentler tone whispering:

"Give them time. I will win their love."

And turning again to May, she said:

You are like your mamma, May. I knew her well, and loved her very dearly. We will talk of her by and by. You can tell of your remembrance, and I of her childhood days."

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Then May looked up for the first time to see, not the new mother, or her father's wife, but the friend of her mother's early youth.

The right chord had been touched. But oh! it was long in yielding. For the jealous nurse watched and baffled every effort to win the children's hearts.

Still patiently striving, the gentle step-mother watched and toiled, sometimes growing almost hopeless of ever winning the little wayward hearts.

With a bitter spirit, Nurse Cummings saw the happiness of the master. Never, in the old time, did she ever see him as then. Never had she heard his laugh ringing through those halls. He would smile gently, sweetly, on his child-like wife; and nurse could not censure aught he did. He was ever kind, attentive and considerate; but withal a shade of sadness dwelt within. And with the new wife he was so very different!—a happy, joyous man. A new life seemed opened to him. And it was that that made Nurse Cummings strive so anxiously against the power that had changed the master so.

In the depths of the nurse's heart she felt how powerful were the weapons she fought against: patient, untiring love; a true, noble heart. Often May would say:

"How very beautiful she is!"

Yes; Margaret was beautiful—queenly beautiful. And proudly George Lindley presented her to his guests, many of whom marvelled that a man could love two women so entirely dissimilar: the first a fairy child, frail and timid; the other all dignity and grace.

"Will they *never* love me? Oh! how shall I win my children's hearts?" murmured Margaret.

She knew not that the longing thought in her heart had escaped her lips, and that her husband's ear had caught it.

"My noble, patient wife! It is not your children's hearts

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that are hard to win; it is their counsellor's misused power. Cummings' devotion to their mother makes her very jealous of another's winning even a portion of their love. Oh! if they, if *she* only knew all!"

"We cannot censure her loyalty, even though we deplore its effects. How spirited Willie is! and how like you! I yearn so constantly to pillow his head on my bosom to sleep, but he will not let me. I think I love him best. How he would comfort me in your absence! But I will not think of that—"

"But I must, love. Many things I must look to, for your happiness and our children's. You will keep up a brave heart. A trip across the ocean is not much nowadays, and I shall soon be back."

Days sped rapidly on. On the next one George Lindley was to sail for a business trip to Europe.

The children were gathered in "mamma's room." Willie was kneeling at nurse's side, repeating his infant prayer.

The father entered, waited until Willie had finished, and then he drew him within his arms, and caused May to sit beside him, and said:

"My darlings, you know to-morrow I shall go from you. I have much to say, and—nay, Cummings, I wish you to hear me too. Sit down. I will tell you a little story, which you may understand too, Willie.

"Many years ago a little girl was left without the love and protection of either parent. None of kindred were near the orphan child. But kind friends sought and drew her away from the home of sorrowful remembrance, to one where she was surrounded by love and sympathy.

"There she found a companion so gentle, so ever watchful for her happiness, that soon the little saddened heart grew light and joyous again. Years passed on, and the friends grew to be maidens, both very beautiful.

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"One with sunny hair, and eyes as blue as yours, my May. A fair, frail being, that must be cherished with the tenderest care.

"The other was older, graver, with raven hair and eyes, dark and full of beauty. It was difficult to decide which of the two was most to be admired.

"It was when the fairy-like maiden was of sixteen years that I knew her first. A perfect child of nature, full of love, confiding, and with winning little ways, she was. I was fond of the beautiful child, humored her sweet will, and watched her carefully, tenderly, as if she had been my little sister.

"But for the other maiden my heart glowed with all the strongest, purest devotion a man can feel—such as he can give *but to one*. That he gave to Margaret. But she gently put it by; for she had discovered that the hope which filled her heart, lived in that of her foster-sister.

"So she stole away from her home, giving not even a parting word, for fear her strength should fail in that trial. Such a sacrifice she made! giving all the joy and taking all the sorrow away in her solitude, that she might save her friend—that the tender heart that had been so saddened in its childhood days, might not, in its early womanhood, be stricken again.

"Then it happened that the gift that Margaret laid aside was given to your mother. Then she became my wife.

"Now, my little May, you know who this dear friend was—Margaret, who loved your mother so.

"Do not my children owe her love?

"So closely did she guard her sacrifice, that your mother never dreamed that her joy was gained through her friend's sorrow. But now she is in a land where joy is complete. And should you mar the happiness of one who has known enough of pain?

"It is a debt of gratitude you owe my wife. And, Cum-

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mings, you too, can a'd your share. You loved your lady truly. I cannot ask for such But do not tutor the children's hearts, except to love and duty."

Margaret sat alone in her own room. A deeper shadow had crept over heart than she had known for many months.

On the morrow her husband was to leave home. She had failed in all her attempts to win his children's love: not one of those little hearts would return her the smallest portion of all the love she gave to them. Her heart was aching bitterly.

A low knock at the door aroused her, and in answer to her "Come in!" Nurse Cummings entered, for the first time since that room had been occupied by its present mistress.

By the hand she held Willie, and drawing him forward, she said:

"Willie has come to fetch you into 'mamma's room.' His father is there, and May wants you too."

It was only a few words, but Margaret knew the long-fought battle was over. Love had crowned her with the sweetest victory ever woman felt.

Cummings never did anything by halves. She opened the door to usher Margaret in, and ere May had embraced and welcomed her coming, the mother's chair was drawn out, and Cummings said:

"The babe will sleep now, if 'mamma' will sing to him."

"Yes, sing, love: his angel mother's cradle song," said the happy father. And as the sweet, low voice, filled with tones of love and thanksgiving, sang that lullaby, methinks that the mother's spirit, as a guardian angel near, heard the song, and entreated Heaven's choicest blessings on her who fills the place of mother so nobly, lovingly, justly, to the motherless ones.

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AN AWFUL WARNING.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"To each his suffering—all are men
Condemned alike to groan;
The prosperous for another's pain,
The wretched for their own."

"Oh, dear! was there *ever* a woman with so many troubles at one time as I have? Indeed, I am almost crazy. And I see no way of relief." This soliloquy was cut short, by Norah, Mrs. Osborn's maid, opening the door and announcing:

"Mrs. Hartly, if you plaze, marm."

"I see you are worried," said the visitor, coming forward and taking her friend's hand. "What is it? Perhaps I can help you. I have had so much of darkness in my own life, that I feel much sympathy for my friends' suffering, either from annoyances or real troubles. Which are yours?"

"Both, I am sure. Sit down, and let me tell you. First my cook has gone off, giving me not an hour's warning. I might manage to cook a little, with Norah's help, until I could get some one, but she has left all the week's washing lying wet in the tubs. Added to this, she in her carelessness threw her shawl over her shoulders, and swept from the breakfast table a very elegant glass pitcher that Mr. Osborn's mother gave him. About this I am dreadfully worried. I don't know what Mr. Osborn will say. We very rarely use this pitcher, except when we have company. I

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have always been so careful of it? Dear! dear! what *shall* I do?"

A smile was playing around the corners of the listener's mouth, as her friend told of her *troubles*, as she called them. But she answered the appealing look and words:

"These are annoyances, truly, but nothing more, dear friend, and I think we can manage these very easily—"

"Well, hear me through; the others you will surely call real troubles. You know young Charles Kent has been visiting our Susie for some months past, and they think they love each other devotedly. She vows she will die if her father sends him off. And he declares he will have her, with or without our consent. Yesterday Mr. Osborn told Susie if he found young Kent here again he would order him out of the house. So, poor child, she is terribly distressed, and I think this morning I can see very plainly she has a different look, one which tells of determined opposition. Her father is very much pleased with George Fairwell, his partner's son, and thinks if Kent were out of the way he would seek Susie's love."

Mrs. Hartly's face had been growing sad during the last few moments, and she asked:

"What has your husband against young Kent?"

"His fickleness in business, his want of energy, and great extravagance, deriving the means to indulge in the latter from his mother's purse. Oh, I fear Susie may be induced to run off with him. Then our son Walter is giving us a great deal of trouble. He is out almost every night, and has money, more than we can account for. Last night, when he came home I smelt the fumes of liquor very plainly. His father is terribly angry with him. He has hardly spoken a kind word to him for a month past. Last night he told him if he was not in by eight to-night, he should not come in at all. I try to hide his faults the most I can,

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but the last keeps me in misery all the time. I've scolded and threatened, coaxed and beseeched, all to no effect. What will become of my boy I fear to think!"

And here the sorely tried mother could no longer restrain her tears. Her friend was deeply moved, and said:

"The anxiety for your children's welfare I can fully sympathize with, and you have serious cause to tremble for both your son and daughter. Yes, you have with these real trials both of your patience and for your judgment, and, oh! you must deal *wisely* now if you would avoid *real troubles*. I don't think God willingly or unnecessarily afflicts His children. I think He often permits us to work out our own future, either for good or ill. I can see how you can find relief from all that worries you. But that you may more fully realize on what dangerous grounds you stand, and how carefully you must deal with your children, I will tell you my own sad experience. I pray God you may never gain wisdom at so terrible a cost as I have. I was married at a very early age, and when scarcely more than a child myself I became a mother. I had no conception of the responsibility devolving upon me. My husband's time was all devoted to business; mine, in a round of fashionable gayeties. We neither had scarce an hour to devote to our children. They were given everything that *wealth* could purchase, yet denied that which even the poorest laborer's children are blest with—their parents' society, teaching, and influence. Hired servants ministered to our little ones, and influenced and moulded their young minds. We loved our boy and girl in our way, and were proud of their beauty and intelligence; and their infant sports tended occasionally to amuse a few leisure moments. Things went on in this way for years, until our eyes were opened to the fact that our children were no longer around us—a youth and maiden were in their place.

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"We soon became aware of an acquaintance existing between Alice and a young man in every way unworthy of her. I tried to put an end to the intimacy between them. I became too sure that they were, or fancied themselves, very much in love. My remonstrances and pleadings were of no avail. How could I expect they would be? A mother's teachings were a new thing, and not understood by my child. Oh, then I felt keenly my neglect of duty! I appealed to my husband for help in this difficulty. He was mortified and indignant. Harsh measures were the result. The young man was driven from the house, and Alice sent off to school in a distant city. A few weeks more, and my worst fears were realized; my child had eloped with her lover. This was a terrible blow to her father; indeed he never entirely rallied from the effects. I had received a severe lesson, from which I endeavored to profit. I began to devote my time, heart, and mind to my son. In him, too, I found the fruits of our neglect. Wilful and defiant, I had but little influence with him. Yet I dared not again appeal to my husband. I hid all my boy's faults, yes, and indulged his extravagances, fearing, if I did not, he would go in debt or obtain the money dishonestly. Night after night would find me watching to let him in without his father's knowledge. Day after day he would make larger demands on my purse. But what could I do? I feared equally for husband and son. Mr. Hartly had been for years suffering from heart disease. Alice's marriage having very much increased this affection, I dared not open his eyes to another sorrow. Should it not prove fatal to him, his action in regard to his son's conduct might drive the boy to some speedy evil. Two years after Alice left us, my husband died. I was left alone to battle with a continual and daily increasing trial. I had not the will, strength, or ability to overcome the boy's determined spirit

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and reckless manner of living. I was completely his slave yielding to all his wishes. A few months before he was twenty-one he came and asked me for two hundred dollars, saying he was going with a friend to a celebrated watering place to spend a few days. I objected. I had only that day paid bills for him to the amount of five hundred dollars, and was very much worried. He coaxed pleasantly at first, then rather insisted that, as he was so nearly of age, he ought to be permitted to use some of what would soon be his own. Still I yielded not. He grew very angry, demanded, and threatened, if I did not, he would do something desperate. Oh, my friend, I have often since marvelled how I lived on after that dreadful scene! My poor boy! so young! his life blasted! his terrible end the result of his mother's neglect of a mother's duty. But I must finish, that you may have an idea of what *real* troubles are. Seeing that I still remained firm, George rushed up to his room, and in a few minutes returned, and asked, 'Mother, will you give me the money?'

"'I cannot, my child,' I answered. I have often wondered how it was I resisted. I must have been impelled for some purpose, good or ill.

"Again he asked, and drawing from his bosom a pistol, added:

"'Mother, if you do not give me the money, I will blow my brains out before your eyes!'

"I looked well at him. I thought I could well see he was only trying to frighten me. Something whispered, 'Remain firm. Gain this victory, and all will be right.'

"I answered, 'No, George. My son, I might as well let you know now that this extravagance must be stopped.'

"'Very well, mother. I will ask once more, and if you do not yield then, good-by.'

"'Never!' I said. Oh, God willed not that grief or

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someone should kill, or I could not have thus lived on, waiting His bidding to come!

"A loud report from the pistol followed my answer, and my boy lay gasping before me!

"'Mother, I did not mean it! God forgive me!' were the last words that ever passed those pallid lips.

"For weeks I knew nothing more."

"Oh, my friend, for me you have suffered over these dreadful days! Yes, yes; now I feel that I have never known trouble. Yours have been beyond endurance," said Mrs. Osborn, with deep feeling.

"Nay, my friend, not so. These troubles have had their soothing balsam.

"I had the great comfort of somewhat making amends to my daughter for the past neglect. In a few years Alice was deserted, and left in great poverty, by her husband. I found her, brought her home, and then it was she felt the blessing of a mother's love, and I the joy of soothing her sorrows. She lived only a few months, and passed away, leaving me another little Alice to cheer my solitude.

"With regard to my dear boy, even here I have a bright ray of hope. I think I was impressed by a good spirit to be firm. Perhaps most likely my boy might have lived on to meet even a worse end. I have since become fully convinced that my boy's end was not that of a willing suicide. A few weeks after I became a little stronger, a friend of George's came to me, and in a manner of great distress accused himself of my boy's fearful end, saying that he had been with George while he unloaded and cleaned his pistols that morning, and while George went off to get some more powder, he had finished the cleaning, and re-loaded them, intending to tell of it when George returned. But waiting until he became tired, he went home, thinking he would be back in the afternoon in time to explain that they were

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loaded again. So, my friend, you see my poor child thought only to frighten me; and he last words of his, 'I did not mean it,' were to say he did not know the pistol was loaded. Yes, yes, I feel sure that He who alone knows the heart pardoned my boy, and that I shall meet him when my days on earth are o'er!"

"Dear Mrs. Hartly, how can I thank you! Yes; I see how wisely I must act to save my children. How can I do this? You, who have suffered so, guide me."

"I will try to assist. Your mother instinct, with God's blessing, must guide you. First relieve your mind about the trifles. Do you not think Norah would put out the clothes to dry?"

"I would not dare ask her. I am afraid she might feel insulted, and go off too."

"Well, she seems to be very fond of Susie; get her assistance in this matter. Let Susie ask her, and offer her an extra dollar or a holiday. You might not be able to get a woman you would be willing to trust, if you should try to find one to-day, and lose much time. Call Susie and speak to her about it, and at the same time give her a cheering word."

Susie was called, and Mrs. Hartly's pleasant words soon induced her to try her influence with Norah. "And offer to assist her, Susie. These are the days when we have all to know how to work, even if it is not necessary for us to do it. If we wish to live comfortably, we must never let our servants see us ignorant of domestic duties, or we shall certainly be the slaves of their will. Busy hands, Susie, are an excellent remedy for the blues, which mamma says you have now," she added.

Mrs. Osborn followed her daughter into the hall, and said:

"Cheer up, darling. Don't worry about your father's

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harsh words. Yesterday he was not feeling happy. You must not tell Charles what he said. Let him come as usual. Mother will fix it all right with papa."

Susie, kissing her mother, went on; and very soon her merry laugh was heard, and Norah's following it.

The friends knew that *that* difficulty was settled. The next, the broken pitcher, was rather harder to manage. However, on examination, Mrs. Hartly found it could be mended, not to be much used perhaps, but so as not to be perceivable, except on very close examination.

"Carry it, or I will, to your china and glass merchant. He will have it mended, and at the same time we can get him to have one blown exactly like it. Say nothing about it to your husband, unless forced to do so. I do not believe in worrying gentlemen with our domestic troubles. They have sufficient in their daily business transactions. Meet them with a pleasant, cheerful face, and believe me, they would willingly be ignorant of such trifles."

"Indeed I feel much better already, my friend. I begin to see how easily these little things can be dealt with. Now about Susie?" said Mrs. Osborn.

"You have already begun rightly. Tell her father my own experience. Let the young man continue visiting her in her parents' home. She might otherwise be induced to meet him elsewhere. If she is fully determined to marry him, this treatment will not hasten it—most likely retard it. Harsh means would drive them to an immediate union, probably. Let her see you have confidence in her, and never say a word against her lover. Most likely she will in time see his faults herself. Induce her father to unite with you, and be as loving and kind as possible to her, and polite to Mr. Kent. Then it will be a hard thing for her to return you ingratitude or disobedience. And now with regard to Walter. Make his home more attractive to him.

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Let him have his friends here. He is sixteen, I think. Make more a companion of him. Let him accompany you about. Appeal to his manliness. Try in some way to keep him home this one evening particularly. To-morrow let him escort you to some place of amusement. Break up these evenings with his friends without letting him know you are doing it. Give him a small sum of money to use as he pleases. Try to get Mr. Osborn to treat him more kindly; get him to try this experiment for a few weeks at least, and I feel confident you will be amply repaid by the result."

"But, my dear friend, about having Walter bring his friends here: I fear they are not proper associates; probably very bad boys," said Mrs. Osborn.

"No matter; better have them here, than have him meet them in their haunts. I think he will either grow ashamed of them, or they will improve, and try to become worthy of your kindness. We cannot imagine how much good this may effect, both for him and his friends, yourself, and the mothers of these boys. Try it! And now I must bid you good-bye. Let me hear from you soon. Keep up a cheerful face, and brave heart; all will be well."

When Mr. Osborn returned at noon, he was not, as usual, met with a list of annoyances, complaints, or repinings. A hastily picked up dinner was ready, which, being presided over by a bright, pleasant face, was very much enjoyed, during which Mrs. Osborn pleasantly told of the cook's leaving, and Susie's making her debut at the wash-tub, assisted by Norah. A cheerful atmosphere pervaded the whole house. Mr. Osborn caught it; forgot his bad feeling towards Walter, and spoke to him very pleasantly. The boy's face brightened, and in a few moments he said, in a hesitating manner:

"We have no school this afternoon, father. Is there anything I can do for you at the store, or anywhere?"

It happened, fortunately, that Walter's services were

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needed just then, and his father accepted the offer very pleasantly. The mother felt this was a favorable time for her to talk to her husband; and putting on her things, she accompanied him on his walk to his business. On the way she opened her heart, told her friend's experience, her own fears and hopes, and after a little persuasion he soon consented to her plans.

"Are you going out, Walter, dear?"

"Yes, mother, I have promised; but I will not be out after eight."

"I wish you would not. Or, go and excuse yourself to your friends, and if you choose, bring them here. You can have the dining-room all to yourself. Papa is going out, and sister wants to spend the evening with a friend, so I will be all alone."

"Are you going to send Walter to come and bring me home, mother?" asked Susie.

Mr. Osborn was still in the room, and the mother answered:

"Why, no, dear, Charles will be there; he will come home with you of course. I want Walter here; I do not like the idea of being here without some protector. Since the robbery of our neighbor's house, I feel a little timid."

A look of mingled surprise and pleasure was on the face of both son and daughter at the mother's answer, particularly as their father was present, and made no objection.

"Mother," said Walter, after his father went out, "the boys I am going to meet are a little rough, and—"

"Never mind, dear; no one will see them if you do not wish them to, unless I should drop in for a moment, and I know many boys are a ittle rough. You can amuse yourself in any way you choose."

"You would not let us romp, I know, and that's what we were going to do," answered the boy now, a frown appearing on his face.

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"Certainly, if you romp where you were going, I would sooner you romp here to-night," answered his mother.

Walter ran off, and in a very short time Mrs. Osborn heard him return with his friends.

During the evening she went into the dining-room, carrying with her some apples and cake; spoke kindly to the boys; told them they must come to see Walter whenever they felt like it, they would always have that room to themselves.

The next evening Walter went with his mother to the "opera;" and so, by one little ruse and another of the mother's, the nightly haunts were forgotten, not only by Walter, but by his friends, most of whom advanced with him on the march of improvement. Both father and mother are now confident as to their son's well-doing in the future. Before a year had passed over, Susie and Charles Kent found out that they did not love each other so very devotedly after all. Susie's eyes were soon opened to her lover's faults, and he thought she was a little too observant and particular to make a suitable wife for him. So he is now hunting out some one else to transfer his affections to.

Susie's evenings are now spent almost entirely in the company of George Fairwell, much to the joy of her father, who begins to think things are looking very favorable for the completion of his hopes.

Mrs. Osborn ever blesses the day that brought to her side Mrs. Hartly, whose sympathy and advice had so relieved her present annoyances and brightened her future prospect.

Mr. Osborn is often heard to say, that "hasty, unkind words and harsh treatment with the young people *may* drive them to speedy evil, and he is fully convinced that *his* plan of gentleness, patience, and forbearance towards our children can do no *harm*, but most likely bring to a happy conclusion all difficulties."

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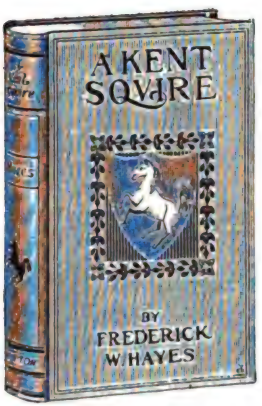

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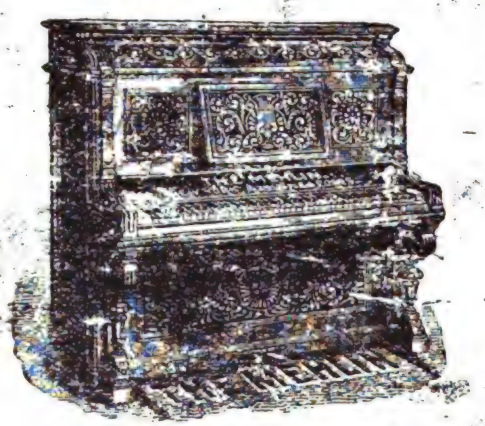

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